





# LORD OF ALL REALMS

BOOK 03

*Ni Cang Tian*

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

# Lord of All Realms

(Jue Dui Xuan Xiang)

(绝对选项)

by

## Pear Lands In The Autumn Spring

(梨落秋溪)

# Synopsis

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In ancient times, there existed giant spirits capable of supporting the heavens. With bodies as enormous as stars, they soared across the universe. Great clan leaders with mysterious blood running through their veins shattered the void and created new worlds. Ancient Qi Warriors crossed a river of stars to enlighten numerous mortal beings. For unknown reasons, an era silently came to an end, all realms were separated, ancient giant spirits disappeared one after another. Thousands of years later, young Nie Tian managed to travel back into ancient times with the help of a drop of blood...

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English Translation by Rex @ [Wuxia World](#)

Translation Edits by Lucas @ [Wuxia World](#)

ePub conversion by Lisa Hayes @ [Hasseno Blog](#)

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# Chapter 201

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After marching on for a few kilometers, the density of the demon Qi rose by approximately five times.

Enveloped by their respective light shields, Hong Can and the others could only see things that were within a five-meter radius.

All they saw along the road were scattered bones and blood stains that had once been human Qi warriors.

The low-tier outsiders must have torn away and devoured the flesh and then tossed the bones away at will.

The scattered bones made Hong Can and the others realize what kind of bloodbath had occurred in this place.

Gradually, even Li Fan from the Cloudsoaring sect began to experience discomfort.

With a stern expression on his face, he turned to Nie Tian and said, “Seriously, are you alright, Nie Tian? This isn’t the time to be a hero. Don’t push yourself to the limit.”

The others also frowned as they looked at Nie Tian with grim expressions.

Normally speaking, considering Nie Tian’s Lesser Heaven stage

cultivation base, he should have collapsed by now.

Even for the late Heaven stage An Shiyi, if she had marched for so long in the increasingly dense demon Qi, she would have had to stop and recover with spirit stones.

The fact that they had to form light shields to protect themselves from the demon Qi had caused them to drain their spiritual power at a surprisingly high speed.

On one hand, they were shocked that Nie Tian could hang on for so long; on the other, they worried about his condition.

They were afraid that Nie Tian was barely holding on and would pass out as soon as they arrived at the sect gate of the Blood sect.

If that happened, they wouldn't be able to command the Bone Blood Demon to join the Blood sect disciples in the battlefield.

"Alright, let me see." Knowing that everyone was concerned with his condition, Nie Tian hesitated for a moment before he decided to use his psychic awareness to examine his spiritual sea.

At that moment, the light shield around him had already taken on a grass-green color, as it was now powered by the vortex of wood power in his spiritual sea.

As they marched on in the demon Qi, the power he used to form the light shields had quietly changed. Even he hadn't noticed.

However, since they were surrounded by raging, dense demon Qi and their attention was concentrated on scanning the vicinity and keeping the demon Qi away, no one actually noticed that the color of his light shield had changed, along with his aura.

But when they stopped marching and Nie Tian examined his spiritual sea, the Greater Heaven stage experts immediately came to notice the changes.

They realized that the color of his light shield was constantly changing.

Furthermore, using their psychic awareness, they detected that the aura's attribute that Nie Tian emanated was also shifting nonstop.

“Wood power!”

“Flame power!”

“Starlight! It's star power!”

“Pure spiritual power!”

As they realized that Nie Tian possessed three types of power other than spiritual power, every one of them was taken aback.



Their eyes brimmed with disbelief, as they looked at Nie Tian, but only seconds later, they seemed to have figured out the reason behind it.

With a complicated expression on his face, Li Fan said, “Nie Tian doesn’t have a specific cultivation attribute. Cultivators like him, who have no innate cultivation attribute, can cultivate incantations of any attribute. Switching between different types of incantations could have made his attempt to hold off the demon Qi less consuming and painstaking.

“However, cultivating different-attributed incantations simultaneously usually requires a lot of time and energy.

“Meanwhile, we as human cultivators have very limited lifespans. Only by breaking through to the next stage will we obtain more of it.

“If someone cultivates a variety of different-attributed incantations at the same time, their cultivation path would be much more intricate than others’.

“If he’s really determined to go down this road, I fear that he won’t be able to go very far.”

Li Fan let out a sigh as he saw through the problem and grew worried about Nie Tian’s future.

“I think you are worrying too much.” Feng Luo said consolingly,

“Didn’t Nie Tian get a Fruit of Life during the Heaven Gate trial? He’ll gain another several hundred years of life with it! With all these extra years, it’s very likely that he’ll make great achievements even if he’s determined to go down this path.”

Upon hearing about the Fruit of Life, Li Fan’s eyes lit up. He nodded and said, “I hope you’re right. Hopefully, he can avoid the problem my martial granduncle is facing.”

It was also at that moment, Nie Tian finished examining his spiritual sea and opened his eyes.

Sounding a bit hesitant, he said, “I have to ask you to get further away from me.”

“Why?” Li Fan was puzzled.

“I want to see if I can use a special technique that my master taught me to keep myself safe from the demon Qi once and for all,” Nie Tian said.

Upon hearing his words, everyone subconsciously stepped away.

When everyone was five meters away from him, Nie Tian placed his hands in front of his chest, palms opposite to each other, and unleashed his psychic awareness.

Moments later, the different-attributed power gradually flowed out of his palms and fingers.

The different types of power gradually interwove and formed a chaotic magnetic field between his hands, which soon spread out with him as the center.

As soon as it expanded to be larger than his spiritual power shield and enveloped the demon Qi close to him, the demon Qi seemed to be suddenly trapped.

Nie Tian secretly probed the changes that were taking place in the magnetic field and found that the numerous wips of demon Qi seemed to be pulled in and manipulated by the magnetic field, none of which could even swim a bit closer to him.

Therefore, he canceled his spiritual power shield and exposed himself to the demon Qi within the chaotic magnetic field.

He even meticulously opened his pores and saw if the demon Qi would enter his body.

He was surprised to discover that only power that originated from him stayed close around him, including the flame power, wood power, starlight, spiritual power, and psychic power.

The demon Qi, which didn't belong to him in the first place, couldn't get an inch closer to him.

“Can you please step a little further away?” Nie Tian asked.

At that moment, all the Greater Heaven stage experts had noticed the strange magnetic field with a radius of three meters around Nie Tian, and the wisps of psychic awareness they had sent into it to probe about had all been twisted and escaped their control.

Their expressions flickered as every one of them voluntarily stepped further away from Nie Tian, as if they were worried that they would be sucked into the strange magnetic field.

Upon hearing Nie Tian's request, Li Fan immediately stepped backwards.

Then, Nie Tian took a few steps towards Li Fan and discovered that as the magnetic field moved along with him, the raging demon Qi close to Li Fan was also enveloped by the magnetic field.

Under the effect of the mysterious twisting power of the magnetic field, the dense demon Qi was soon broken down into trivial, blackish-purple wisps.

Since the tiny wisps didn't belong to Nie Tian, they were pushed to the far edge of the magnetic field.

"This is awesome!" With this new finding, Nie Tian now only needed to consume a small proportion of every type of power he possessed to maintain the magnetic field, and he wouldn't need to worry about the demon Qi any longer!

With a broad smile on his face, Nie Tian said to everyone, "Okay,

I'm done now. You don't have to worry about me any more. The demon Qi won't affect me any more!"

"Nie Tian," Li Fan exclaimed, "is this an incantation that martial granduncle taught you?"

"Yes, it is," Nie Tian answered.

"How come I didn't know that we had these kinds of mysterious incantations in the Cloudsoaring sect?" Li Fan muttered.

"I suppose my master recently received the enlightenment and therefore created it." Nie Tian answered casually.

Even though Li Fan had a feeling that he was lying, considering that there were people from the other sects present, he didn't pursue the matter.

Seeing that by creating a mysterious magnetic field, Nie Tian had managed to solve the demon Qi problem once and for all, Hong Can gasped in admiration, "Good job! Senior Wu Ji is indeed a miracle-worker. I'm totally convinced now."

"Yeah, no wonder he could raise those three outstanding disciples," Zou Yi agreed.

"Alright! Since you're fine, let's move out!" Feng Luo said with an urgent tone.

“You’re right,” Nie Tian answered.

Then, everyone moved out again and marched towards the sect gate of the Blood sect.

Enveloped by the chaotic magnetic field, Nie Tian no longer needed to worry about the demon Qi, and traveled with even more lightness than the Greater Heaven stage experts.

Meanwhile, he could even spare some energy to scan the vicinity with his psychic awareness.

After an unknown period of time, Li Fan could no longer hold on, so he stopped and said, “I need to replenish my spiritual power.”

“I’m also close to my limit,” Zou Yi said.

Even though Hong Can and Feng Luo were in slightly better conditions, they were also afraid that they would soon drain all their spiritual power, and by the time they arrived at the Blood sect, they would be too weak to withstand a single blow.

“Since you all need to stop and recover while the Blood sect is desperately in need of my aid, can I go first, if you don’t mind?” said Nie Tian.

# Chapter 202

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In the Blood sect.

The enormous blood shadow floating high above Li Jing was still rapidly absorbing spirit beast blood from the blood pools scattered around the square, but the bottoms of those pools could already be seen.

Meanwhile, numerous low-tier outsiders were still ramming into the scarlet light shield with their full strength.

The demon Qi was so dense that it could almost take liquid form, and in some places where it slammed into the light shield, cracking sounds rang out. Apparently, the demon Qi was also gradually wearing down the defensive shield.

All the Blood sect disciples under the light shield were looking nervously at the blood in the pools, as each and every one of them was well aware that once the blood pools ran dry, the giant blood shadow would immediately lose its power source and the defensive shield would fall apart along with it.

If it came to that, the countless low-tier outsiders that were hovering around them would bare their fangs and claws and flood them.

That moment was exactly what Groete, Sarah, and the other four high-tier outsiders were waiting for.

“I don’t think we can hold on for much longer...”

Sectmaster Li Jing realized that they were about to run out of spirit beast blood and the bloody aura around her was also gradually dispersing. Finally, she couldn’t help but called out, “Contact Yu Tong again and ask about their situation!”

“Got it.” Shen Xiu narrowed her eyes and tried to use the Blood sect’s secret magic to contact Yu Tong again.

A while passed.

Frowning, Shen Xiu shook her head and said, “There’s no response.”

Li Jing was surprised. “How come?”

“I don’t know, either.” With a frustrated expression, Shen Xiu answered. “Little Tong knows how to use the Blood Spirit Pearl. Normally speaking, whenever I cast the spell, she’ll be able to sense it. Since she’s not answering me now, there are only two possible reasons; one, she’s in danger and doesn’t have the time to reply or two, she doesn’t have the Blood Spirit Pearl any more.”

After a moment of pondering, Li Jing said, “As long as the Bone Blood Demon is with them, those low-tier outsiders won’t pose a threat to them. Meanwhile, all six of the high-tier outsiders are here waiting to kill us. Therefore, it’s not likely that they are in



danger. This means the Blood Spirit Pearl is probably not in her hands. This doesn't sound good..."

"Sectmaster!" An elder of the Blood sect reminded Li Jing in a loud voice. "We're about to run out of spirit beast blood!"

Li Jing and Shen Xiu immediately looked over at the blood pools around the square and found that indeed one of them was already completely empty.

Then, Li Jing looked up and found that the giant blood shadow had already shrunk visibly, and the scarlet light shield it created over them had also become somewhat thinner and frailer.

In some places where a few gigantic low-tier outsiders were crashing into the shield, fissures could already be seen.

"Dammit! We're losing our protection!" The other Blood sect disciples were originally sitting cross-legged and recuperating with spirit stones. After seeing the unfavorable situation, they all rose to their feet, drew out their spiritual tools, and readied themselves for battle.

Groete, who the other high-tier outsiders had referred to as lord, also took note that the enormous blood shadow was withering and said, "The stalemate is finally about to be broken."

A faint, bloodthirsty smile appeared on his face as he issued orders to his five subordinates, "Attack as soon as the light shield

breaks! Put an end to their miserable lives.”

“Understood,” the purple eyes of Sarah, the female outsider, shone with intense hatred. “These humans took our home and imprisoned our people in the Hell sect. They even drain their life essence to power their grand spell formation. We’ve been waiting to return to the Realm of Flame Heaven for centuries. We will have our revenge today!!”

“Let’s kill them!!” Raging killing intent could also been seen in the other four high-tier outsiders’ eyes as they rubbed their hands together, waiting for the light shield to break.

CRUNCH!

The sound of sharp tools crashing into the ground echoed out from afar as a figure significantly bigger than any low-tier outsider slowly appeared in rolling demon Qi.

Since the demon Qi could dull humans’ senses but not the outsiders’, Groete and the other five high-tier outsiders heard the strange sound and immediately turned to look at the source of the sound, where they saw the gigantic figure.

“It’s the Bone Giant!” Upon a closer look, Groete spoke as a sinister expression appeared on his handsome face. “This is impossible!”

He knew how dense the demon Qi in this area was.

He had never expected that any human Qi warrior would be able to come this far to the center of the demon Qi-covered area in such a short time, much less Nie Tian, who he had considered unworthy to be his opponent.

According to his estimation, it would take Hong Can and the other Greater Heaven stage experts at least another hour to get to this place.

By the time they arrived, the battle between them and the Blood sect might have already been over. Even it wasn't, Li Jing would have been severely injured by the six of them, and the outcome of the battle would have been set.

He had made the calculations over and over in his mind and deemed his plan impeccable.

However, the appearance of the Bone Blood Demon had proven the opposite.

He found it hard to accept.

“Sectmaster! Did you hear anything?” Excitement could be seen on Shen Xiu’s wrinkled face as she exclaimed. “If my speculations are correct, that sound was the sound of the Bone Blood Demon walking towards us. Only when its fleshless feet land heavily on the ground it would create a sound like that.

“I can’t be wrong. It must be the Bone Blood Demon!”

Li Jing took a deep breath and said, “You’re right. I engraved that unique sound in my mind the day I brought the Bone Blood Demon back to our sect. Little Tong did a good job! So did that Nie Tian kid! Truth be told, I didn’t expect that they would arrive with the Bone Blood Demon in such timely fashion.”

With these words, Li Jing paused, as if she was pondering something.

Seconds later, the blood-colored lotus she was sitting on suddenly rose up into the air.

“The scarlet light shield can still hold on for some time. All disciples who are at the Greater Heaven stage or higher, come with me! Let’s charge out of the shield and kill as many outsiders as we can!

“All those with cultivation bases lower than the Greater Heaven stage stay here. The demon Qi out there is too strong for you. You won’t be able to resist it.”

As soon as she uttered these words, the lotus she had been sitting on charged forward.

It seemed that she didn’t run into any obstructions and shot out of the light shield.

Upon seeing her flying out of the shield, Shen Xiu and a few others also dashed out while summoning their spiritual tools and unleashing torrential blood auras.

The moment they left, the light shield that was originally very wide began to shrink with a much faster speed.

All those who remained in the light shield were the Lesser Heaven and Heaven stage disciples.

“Who’s out there? Is it Nie Tian, Wu Ji’s disciple?”

Li Jing’s voice spread out in the raging demon Qi as the lotus she sat on began to glow incomparably brightly.

Dazzling, blood-colored light condensed into a giant, red cross in front of her before shooting forward.

Moments later, another two giant crosses took shape in front of her and shot forward, slicing a dozen low-tier outsiders into chunks of blackish-purple meat.

The wails and howls of the low-tier outsiders filled the air after she called out Nie Tian’s name.

“She dares to come out of the shield?!” Sarah let out a cold snort before her curvaceous, tightly-wrapped body launched into the air.

The rolling demon Qi in the vicinity suddenly converged on one point, and soon a scary, dark hole took form.

The dark hole looked like a demon's wide-open mouth while foul smell continuously emanated out of it.

The edge of the hole wiggled and expanded, as if it were trying to devour something.

In the next moment, the three giant crosses Li Jing forged with her spiritual power were sucked into the hole and ground into pieces.

On the ground, Shen Xiu and a handful others dashed out of the defensive shield and started to cast Blood sect magics to kill outsiders around them.

As Shen Xiu casted a spell, an enormous net of blood strings rose from under the ground, creating mountain-shivering sounds.

The threads of the net were as sharp as razors as they cut numerous low-tier outsiders into pieces of meat.

That blood net was the the most famous forbidden technique of the Blood sect, and that was why she had passed it onto Yu Tong.

“Lord Groete, let me deal with that woman. You just need to stall that young man who controls the Bone Blood Demon. I believe that without the Bone Blood Demon there to distract me, I'll be able to

finish that woman in a short time.”

“Yeah, that’s also what I think,” Groete replied. “You just worry about that woman.”

At that very moment, after the Bone Blood Demon had cleared the path for him, Nie Tian appeared in their sight, enveloped in his magnetic field.

# Chapter 203

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Nie Tian came to a stop.

The demon Qi in this area was excessively dense, so with his cultivation base, he could barely see anything with his eyes.

With a brief thought, seven starlight spots, wrapped by seven wisps of psychic awareness, flew out of the seven fragmentary stars in his soul. Like “eyes” in the heavens, they started observing the battlefield.

Moments before, Nie Tian had heard Li Jing’s calling, but her voice was quickly drowned by the thunderous roars of the outsider demons.

The first thing he commanded the Heaven Eyes to do was to spread out and search for the source of the voice.

Via one Heaven Eye, he discovered that the sectmaster of the Blood sect, Li Jing, was sitting atop a blood-colored lotus, casting all kinds of Blood sect secret magics to kill the unending waves of outsiders.

At the same time, a coquettish female outsider cast her spells and formed a gigantic black hole in midair, devouring the red crosses Li Jing created.

He could tell that the female outsider was at least as strong as Li



Jing, if not stronger.

Through other Heaven Eyes, he saw that Shen Xiu had formed a enormous Earth Web and used its threads, as sharp as razors, to exterminate the giant, low-tier outsiders around her.

Not far from her, nearly a dozen powerful experts of the Blood sect were also valiantly brandishing their spiritual tools and shooting out blood-colored light beams to kill low-tier outsiders.

The Heaven Eyes enabled Nie Tian to determine their cultivation bases at first glance; all of them were Greater Heaven or Worldly realm stage experts.

However, the low-tier outsider kept charging at them like an endless river. It seemed that they had no idea what fear was as they madly charged towards the Blood sect disciples under Groete's command.

Apparently, the deaths of those low-tier outsiders meant nothing to him.

Seeing numerous low-tier outsider being cut into pieces, he didn't even have any expression on his face, as if he still had many more of them to spare.

He waved his hand and the four high-tier outsiders dashed towards Shen Xiu and the others like four flashes.

As soon as they did, the sky-filling demon Qi started to flow more rapidly and violently, and bright, purple spots started to fall from the sky.

The moment those spots made contact with the low-tier outsiders, their fighting spirits were immediately bolstered and they started fighting more ferociously.

On the other hand, the Blood sect Qi warriors who made contact with the purple spots let out miserable screams as their protective spiritual power shield broke down.

Then, as the demon Qi engulfed them and entered their bodies, they would fall into a dispirited state while their eyes gradually turned purple.

All those who lost the protection of their spiritual power shields would rapidly be drowned and lose their battle power, but more terrifyingly, as they took in more and more demon Qi, they would become potential trouble for the others.

In no more than a few seconds, Nie Tian saw six Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors from the Blood sect lose their protection.

Although they had killed quite a few low-tier outsiders in return, there were hundreds of them, and so having lost several dozen wasn't a big deal to them.

“No wonder they could only hold their ground and defend.

Considering their strength, they can't deal with such a big outsider army." Nie Tian rapidly came to realize the disparity between the two sides' strength. Without any hesitation, he used the Heaven Eyes to lock onto a target.

It was a low-tier outsider that was approximately ten-meters tall, blackish-purple from head to toe, and had sharp fangs growing out of its mouth.

It was chasing after a Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior from the Blood sect, who was stumbling as he ran for his life.

"Go!" Nie Tian issued the command.

Upon his order, the Bone Blood Demon that had been standing by his side like a unwavering mountain instantly strode toward them.

A strong bloody aura that overshadowed those of all the low-tier outsiders rippled out of its outstandingly gigantic body, which gave a sudden boost to the observing Blood sect disciples' morale.

ZZZZZLA!

Like a red flash, a blood-colored light beam traveled through the air and penetrated the outsider's skull.

The outsider didn't even have the time to react before it was stuck down by the Bone Blood Demon from afar.

The Bone Blood Demon had possessed an eighth level bloodline power when it was alive. Even though it was now a Blood Demon, it still possessed a seventh level bloodline power, making it by no means weaker than Li Jing.

Therefore, to it, killing that low-tier outsider, who merely possessed the fourth level bloodline power, was a piece of cake.

CRACKLE!

As the Bone Blood Demon kept striding forward, its gigantic feet made of sharp bones stabbed deeply into the earth, leaving behind a line of huge holes.

It arrived by the dead outsider's side and, using only its psychic power, it made the blood rush out of the outsider's body and swirl into the air.

Then, as the blood showered down on it, its grayish-brown bones began to show a faint, mysterious luster.

After absorbing the outsider's blood, it began to thrum with an even more terrifying aura of Qi and blood.

All the disciples of the Blood sect felt a shudder upon seeing the scene while fighting their respective enemies, including Li Jing and Shen Xiu.

Many Blood sect disciples couldn't help but exclaim, "Blood Refining Incantation!"

"This Bone Blood Demon actually mastered the Blood Refining Incantation!? It can absorb power from its enemies' blood in battle!?"

"I can't believe a Bone Giant that possessed an eighth level bloodline power is so powerful after being turned into a Blood Demon!"

Even Shen Xiu, who had participated in the whole Blood Demon refining process, was amazed by how powerful it turned out to be.

"Continue!" As soon as Nie Tian's Heaven Eyes locked onto another target, the Bone Blood Demon lunged forward.

As the Bone Blood Demon, who possessed unparalleled battle prowess, swung its razor-sharp bone hands, one low-tier outsider after another was cut in half, as if they were pieces of blackish-purple tofu.

Once in awhile, it would grab a low-tier outsider and rip it apart with its bare hands.

While fighting, it didn't forget to use the Blood Refining Incantation to summon outsiders' blood and pour it onto its grayish-brown body, which seemed to provide it with eternal power.

Not only did Nie Tian not detect any energy loss from it, but he even found that its Qi and blood were actually growing stronger and stronger.

It seemed that as long as it kept killing outsiders and showering itself with their blood, it would be able to fight forever and even get stronger during the process.

The only thing Nie Tian worried about was its consumption of life power. After all, the blood he dripped into the Bone Blood Demon's heart carried a limited amount of life power.

Considering how powerful it was, every second it moved about, it was consuming a tremendous amount of life power.

Once it ran out of life power, it would once again fall into a slumber.

Just as Nie Tian was pondering his worries, Groete, the highest-ranked outsider, quietly walked towards Nie Tian.

Seeing the Bone Blood Demon growing a bit stronger after killing every low-tier outsider, he realized that he wouldn't be able to stop it by fighting it directly if he were to do it by himself.

Therefore, he deemed the wisest move would be to kill its controller: Nie Tian.

Once Nie Tian was dead, the Bone Blood Demon would run amok and start massacring everyone in sight. By that time, Qi warriors from the Blood sect would also become its target.

Grinning coldly at Nie Tian, a brutal smile appeared on his face. “Before, you had people to protect you, but you’re all alone now!

“You really shouldn’t have come by yourself! Considering your cultivation base, I’ll crush you like an insect! Then, the Bone Blood Demon will no longer be a threat!”

With these words, Groete blurred into a purple flash and swooped toward Nie Tian.

# Chapter 204

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Li Jing, sectmaster of the Blood sect, paid attention to Nie Tian the entire time, since she knew that Nie Tian's ability to control the Bone Blood Demon would determine how the war went.

After discovering that the Bone Blood Demon was rampaging across the battlefield under Nie Tian's command, cutting down numerous low-tier outsiders, she began to think highly of him.

As soon as she saw Groete make his move, she immediately saw through his plan and said, "Elder Sister Shen! Go and protect Nie Tian!"

Upon hearing Li Jing's command, Shen Xiu, who was using her Earth Web to kill low-tier outsiders, also realized the urgency of the matter.

She immediately decided to ditch the low-tier outsiders and rush to Nie Tian's side as quickly as she could.

At that moment, a male high-tier outsider stepped out of the crowd of low-tier outsiders and blocked Shen Xiu's way. "You'll have to get through me first!"

ROOOOOOAR!

Groete let out a loud screech and dozens of low-tier outsiders instantly rushed over and surrounded the area where he and Nie



Tian were standing.

Apparently, those low-tier outsiders were deployed there to stop whoever intended to come to Nie Tian's aid.

There were too many of them. Even though the Bone Blood Demon had been unstoppable, it was almost impossible for it to finish off such a large number of low-tier outsiders in a short time.

However, Groete was confident that he would be able to kill Nie Tian while the Bone Blood Demon was occupied.

"Damn!" Being blocked by a male high-tier outsider, Shen Xiu grow anxious. She wanted to order other high-stage Qi warriors from the Blood sect to go help Nie Tian.

However, she understood that, with so many low-tier outsiders standing between them and Nie Tian, her companions probably wouldn't be able to get through their defensive line and get to Nie Tian in time.

Once Nie Tian was dead, the Bone Blood Demon would immediately go out of control and consider both the outsider invaders and disciples of the Blood sect as its enemies.

If that happened, the formidable weapon they counted on to turn the situation around might soon become the final nail on the Blood sect's coffin.

Shen Xiu's heart was burning with anxiety. However, since she couldn't come up with a solution, she could only watch as Groete, the outsider lord, stepped closer to Nie Tian.

Due to the consumption of the different types of power, the chaotic magnetic field around Nie Tian had already shrunk to a two-meter range, and it was continuing to shrink as time passed.

It wouldn't be very long before it completely vanished.

Originally, Nie Tian had planned to summon the different types of power he possessed to expand the magnetic field again, but now that Groete was coming at him, he no longer had the time to do that.

He remembered how deadly Groete had been while dealing with Hong Can, Li Fan, Feng Luo, and the other experts at the same time.

With great ease, he had managed to slaughter two Heaven stage experts, making Hong Can and the rest have no choice but to defend.

According to Nie Tian's assessment, now that Groete was surrounded by even denser demon Qi, his strength would be equal to any late Greater Heaven stage experts, if not stronger.

He had dealt with a couple of opponents at this level during the Heaven Gate trial. However, every time, he had been forced to use

Ice Blast Pearls and the spiritual talismans his master had given him, plus team up with other trial takers from the seven sects to barely win.

Now that he had used up all his powerful weapons and life-savers, he would have to fight with no help, so he didn't think he would stand a chance against such a powerful opponent in his current situation.

On the other hand, having come such a long way through the demon Qi, he had already consumed a large portion of the spiritual power in his spiritual sea.

According to his estimation, he only had fifty percent of his peak strength left at this point.

He didn't have the confidence that he would be able to defeat Groete even when he was in his peak state, much less now.

Seeing Groete approaching like a purple flash, Nie Tian experienced a numbness in his scalp, as well as a sudden rush of helplessness and desperation.

Groete suddenly came to a stop. Standing ten meters away from Nie Tian, he lifted his saber and pointed it towards Nie Tian as he said, "The magnetic field around you is quite interesting. It can even keep away the demon Qi."

As a matter of fact, Groete had secretly urged himself to pay extra

attention when he saw Nie Tian arriving so much earlier than his estimation.

He knew very well that all those who had been there to protect Nie Tian were far stronger, but none of them had made it to this place, only Nie Tian.

This had proven Nie Tian's uniqueness.

He knew that there must have been something special about him, since he could remain unharmed in the torrential demon Qi.

Therefore, he had secretly sent out his soul consciousness to examine him as soon as he showed up.

However, the moment his soul consciousness had arrived close to Nie Tian, it had been distorted and cut off from him.

Only then did he come to realize that the strange magnetic field was what had made Nie Tian bold enough to come by himself.

With that understanding in mind, he didn't barge into it, but rather chose to test the magnetic field with his saber from a safe distance.

WHOOSH!

The saber suddenly left Groete's hand and whizzed towards Nie

Tian. As it traveled in the air, raging demon Qi converged on it before soon turning it into a sinister devil, bearing fangs and brandishing claws towards Nie Tian.

Nie Tian had seen nothing like this saber, as he sensed that the saber had actually turned into a living devil.

It seemed as if the saber was made from a dreadful devil via some kind of mysterious technique, since not only could Nie Tian detect the fluctuations of flesh and blood on it, but he could even detect the aura of a soul.

He even examined it with the seven Heaven Eyes that were floating around him, and they seemed to tell him the same: it was a breathing devil, not a tool!

Meanwhile, besieged by the overwhelming demon Qi from every direction, the magnetic field already showed signs of running out of energy.

The tough situation made Nie Tian feel suffocated; he was taken over by the devastating feeling that he would be skinned and torn into pieces by the devil in the next moment.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

His heart started pounding faster and faster as his life was threatened.

All of a sudden, he was struck by an idea: the Flame Dragon Armor! At this point, no longer afraid to expose the Flame Dragon Armor, he decided to use it save his life.

Having remained silent for a long time, the Flame Dragon Armor had been refining the Earthflame Crystal Strings it had collected and was using the energy to mend its own injuries.

Nie Tian could already sense a soul thriving with it, and thus he knew that it was getting closer and closer to fully awakening.

As soon as he called out to the Flame Dragon Armor, it instantly flew out of his bracelet of holding.

The Flame Dragon Armor whizzed out surrounded by flames, like a sun that was emanating endless light and heat into the surroundings.

Thrumming with a blazing aura that was strong enough to burn any living beings into ashes, it didn't even wait for Nie Tian to give further instructions before charging into the rolling demon Qi.

In the blink of an eye, it rammed into the sinister devil that had been created by a mix of the saber and demon Qi.

The devil felt like a sun had shot into its enormous body, as flames that could destroy the heavens and extinguish the earth began to burn inside of it while making crackling sounds.

Meanwhile, the gigantic devil started to shrink down, as if it were being burned away by the heavenly fire.

Li Jing, Shen Xiu, and other powerful experts from the Blood sect couldn't help but exclaim upon the sight of the Flame Dragon Armor, "Spirit Channeling grade treasure!"

They simply couldn't believe their own eyes.

It was especially true with Li Jing, since she knew better than anyone that, as powerful as Wu Ji as was, he only had one Spirit Channeling grade treasure in his possession, which she couldn't be more familiar with.

However, the burning armor she was looking at wasn't it.

This meant that this Spirit Channeling grade treasure's master was none other than Nie Tian!

To everyone present, it was completely unbelievable for a Lesser Heaven stage young man to own a treasure so rare.

They probably would never come across a similar case in the entire Realm of Flame Heaven.

At that moment, as flabbergasted as she was, Li Jing finally stopped worrying about Nie Tian's safety.

# Chapter 205

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Li Jing had a rough idea of Groete's strength.

From what she could tell, he only possessed a fifth level bloodline power. However, since extremely rich demon Qi reigned this area, his strength was boosted, making him seem stronger than Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors.

As a matter of fact, his true strength was at the same level as Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors.

It was just that human Qi warriors' abilities were compromised in the demon Qi while his abilities were enhanced.

Nevertheless, the Lesser Heaven stage Nie Tian obviously wasn't as strong as Groete, and it wouldn't be strange if Groete killed him with little effort.

That was why she had been worried about Nie Tian's safety.

It was the appearance of the Flame Dragon Armor that eradicated her worries. After all, a Spirit Channeling grade treasure at his disposal would greatly close the gap between their actual strength.

She had confidence that now that the Flame Dragon Armor was in the picture, Groete finally would meet his match.



Therefore, she became slightly relieved and focused all her attention on Sarah, the female outsider.

BAM! BAM!

The Flame Dragon Armor was still burning vigorously and unleashing heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing heat. The devil, which had been created by the saber and demon Qi, couldn't withstand the devastating flame power and kept shrinking.

Moments later, the devil reassumed the shape of a broad saber.

Only now, the saber had become dark and lifeless, and its previous purple glow seemed to have been burned away by the Flame Dragon Armor.

Groete's handsome face looked very grim. His purple eyes were filled with disbelief as he tried to determine the grade of the Flame Dragon Armor.

While he was caught up in his thoughts, Sarah, who had been fighting Li Jing, called out to him, "Be careful! It's a Spirit Channeling grade treasure!"

"Spirit Channeling grade treasure!!" Groete was taken aback.

During that time, Nie Tian finally found the chance to summon enough strength to once again expand the chaotic magnetic field to a five-meter radius.

CLANG!

The burning Flame Dragon Armor suddenly rammed into Groete's saber.

The saber let out a scream that only outsiders could make, and rapidly flew spinning back to Groete.

Groete held out one hand and grabbed it before he stared at Nie Tian with a strange look in his eyes.

ZZZZZLA!

Meanwhile, numerous blood-colored beams of light shot out of the Bone Blood Demon's finger bones, and, like scarlet spears that were sharp enough to penetrate plates made by refined iron, they pierced through one low-tier outsider after another.

By doing that, the Bone Blood Demon killed more than a dozen low-tier outsiders that had been gathered around Nie Tian and Groete, sealing off the two of them from the others.

Following Nie Tian's instructions, the thirty-meter tall Bone Blood Demon spared no effort to kill the low-tier outsiders and break through the blockade.

From time to time, it would use the Blood sect's Blood Refining

Incantation to compel the outsiders' thick, purple blood to fly out of their bodies and rain down on it in fine streams.

Every single bone the outsider blood rained on seemed to turn into a sponge, greedily sucking away the energy.

As the Bone Blood Demon refined more and more outsider blood, its power grew continuously, as if it would never get to the peak.

Gradually, the increasingly vigorous energy fluctuations that the Bone Blood Demon emanated made even Sarah worry about the situation.

Originally, she had confidence that she would be able to overtake it, knowing that after being turned into a Blood Demon, the Bone Giant's strength would be weakened to some extent.

However, now that she had been caught up in her fight with Li Jing and couldn't stop the Bone Blood Demon, it had already grown so strong that even she wasn't certain that she would be able to defeat it any more.

As she kept track of the Bone Blood Demon's aura, Sarah grew increasingly uneasy.

"Your highness! You have to finish off that kid as soon as possible. That Bone Giant's battle prowess is constantly on the rise.

“If this goes on, it may soon regain its original level of strength!

“Once it recovers its eighth level bloodline power, I’m afraid even I won’t be able to defeat it.

“Even when its bloodline isn’t truly awakened yet!”

She finally couldn’t help but urge Groete to kill Nie Tian in the shortest time possible, so as to stop the Bone Blood Demon from getting stronger.

Groete let out a cold harrumph. “I don’t need you to tell me what to do!”

At that moment, composure and confidence had already disappeared from his face.

What had taken their place were rage and impatience. Due to his misjudgment of Nie Tian’s strength and resourcefulness, he had successively failed to kill Nie Tian when they first met and falsely estimated the time Nie Tian would have arrived; he even failed to kill Nie Tian when he had no powerful allies to protect him.

Actually, after a Spirit Channeling grade treasure had come to Nie Tian’s aid at the crucial moment, not only did his attempt to kill him turn out in vain, but his saber even sustained serious damage.

With these thoughts, Groete could no longer stay calm and

eventually grew frenzied.

“Kill him!” he yelled at the top of his lungs.

Upon hearing his command, the low-tier outsiders that had been attacking the Blood sect disciples immediately stopped.

Each and every one of them turned around and swooped towards Nie Tian with ferocious roars.

Bent on killing Nie Tian as quickly as possible, Groete brought out a, small round item that looked like a demon’s eyeball. As soon as it appeared, a strong, mysterious soul fluctuation spread out in every direction, covering the entire Blood sect. “Rise, my minions!”

As soon as the Blood sect Qi warriors, who had remained still after being infiltrated by the demon Qi, were enveloped by the soul aura unleashed by the Demon Eye, their hollow and lifeless pupils began to shine with bizarre, purple light.

Their pale skin also gradually shed its original color and took on a blackish-purple color that was the same as the low-tier outsiders.

ROOOOAR!

One after another, they all let out mad howls and bolted towards Nie Tian along with the low-tier outsiders.

It was as if Nie Tian was the only thing they could see.

“Dammit!” Via the seven Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian had a clear view of everything happening on the battlefield, including the movement of the low-tier outsiders and the changes to those infected human Qi warriors.

He realized that Groete had started taking him seriously and had grown very eager to kill him.

That was the only explanation for why he redirected all the troops that had been fighting the Blood sect to attack him alone.

At this point, he felt that the pressure he faced might even be comparable to Li Jing and Shen Xiu. None of the other Worldly realm experts from the Blood sect had ever faced a situation so dangerous. “They’re demonized!”

At that moment, Groete suddenly threw his head back and heaved a roar.

He suddenly began to thrum with a strange energy that seemed to be able to awaken his bloodline power. Under Nie Tian’s flabbergasted gaze, he began to undergo horrendous changes.

Originally, Groete was only about the same size as a human male, only slightly taller.

However, in the reflection of Nie Tian's eyes, Groete's body, bit by bit, began to match the physique of a low-tier outsider!

# Chapter 206

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Groete, who was originally two meters tall, went through great changes and rapidly bulked up.

The rich demon Qi in his surroundings madly poured into his body as if it were helping him expand. Therefore, he finished demonizing in seconds, a skill only high-tier outsiders had mastered.

Now that the process was complete, he had become more than three meters tall and had bulging muscles all over his body, which seemed to be full of explosive power.

The curved horns on his forehead and his tail had also grown significantly larger.

Meanwhile, black scales had grown out of his flesh, covering whichever part of his body that hadn't been covered by his fine armor.

A violent energy fluctuation surged out of Groete's demonized body and spread far into the surrounding area, making Nie Tian increasingly astonished.

Via the seven Heaven Eyes, he saw every single change that had occurred to Groete's body. He had a clear feeling that after the process, Groete's battle prowess had risen to a whole new level.



Before, he had considered Groete to be as strong as a late Greater Heaven stage human cultivator, but after the series of astounding changes, he now deemed Groete as strong as a Worldly realm Qi warrior.

PUFF!

Groete spit out a mouthful of purple blood. His handsome face had now become sinister and full of bulging veins.

WHOOSH!

It was also at this moment the Flame Dragon Armor noticed the unfavorable situation Nie Tian was in, and thus rapidly flew back and floated right in front of him.

Clusters of raging flames flew out of the Flame Dragon Armor and spread out in a thin layer outside of Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field, like a sheet of flames.

As the blazing sheet stretched out further and further, a shield of raging fire took form.

A faint wisp of thought flew out of the Flame Dragon Armor.

Nie Tian caught it at the first possible moment.

Eyes narrowed, he tried to comprehend it as he kept an eye on

Groete.

He knew that it must be a message from the Flame Dragon Armor's soul.

Even though the message was wordless, Nie Tian somehow quickly understood the Flame Dragon Armor's intention.

It urged him to speed up the rotation of the vortex of flame power in his spiritual sea, circulate flame power through his whole body, and use it to fight his enemy.

It seemed that only in this way would he be able to make use of the Flame Dragon Armor and display its might to some extent.

Therefore, he did accordingly.

The vortex of flame power in his spiritual sea rotated faster and faster, and he now only drew power from this vortex.

Before long, fire-attributed spiritual power filled every meridian in his body, and by doing this, his skin even somehow turned crimson.

At that moment, he had a feeling that the bond between him and the Flame Dragon Armor had grown a lot stronger.

“Nie Tian! That high-tier outsider has demonized, which means

he's awakened his bloodline power!" Shen Xiu, elder of the Blood sect, shouted out to him from afar, urging him to be extra careful.

OWWW! ROAAAR!

At that very moment, a wave of low-tier outsiders reached Nie Tian's side with the turned Blood sect disciples at their back, whose pupils had turned completely purple.

Apparently, they had only Nie Tian in their eyes and nothing else.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

One after another, numerous gigantic flame pillars shot out of the Flame Dragon Armor, and right as they were about to reach the incoming low-tier outsiders, each and every one of them morphed into Flame Dragons.

Baring their sharp claws, the Flame Dragons charged into the wave of low-tier outsiders.

The low-tier outsiders immediately burst into flames as soon as they made contact with the Flame Dragons. Letting out miserable wails, they hastily used all their power to contend with the fierce flames.

Even still, one by one, they dropped to the ground and died, their black-purple flesh melted off their bones.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

The Flame Dragon Armor shot out many more fire clusters to deal with the Blood sect Qi warriors who had been polluted and enslaved by the demon Qi.

Nie Tian finally got to see the might of the Flame Dragon Armor. As a matter of fact, it hadn't moved yet, only sending out flame blasts, which turned into destructive Flame Dragons; even still, it managed to stop all the incoming low-tier outsiders and turned Qi warriors.

However, unleashing torrential flame power nonstop could be consuming even for the Flame Dragon Armor.

It seemed that the outsider lord, Groete, also had a clear idea that only those low-tier outsiders and turned disciples of the Blood sect wouldn't be enough to kill Nie Tian, who had a Spirit Channeling grade treasure at his disposal.

All of a sudden, while the low-tier outsiders attacked Nie Tian, Groete hid himself in a cluster of demon Qi so dense that it was like a ball of black water thrumming extremely strange energy fluctuations.

Even via the seven Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian wasn't able to precisely locate Groete within it.

All he could see was a cluster of demon Qi floating closer and closer to him.

The Flame Dragon Armor had noticed the approaching demon Qi cluster and shot out a pillar of flame significantly thicker than before toward it.

However, just as it was about to bombard on the cluster of demon Qi, the cluster broke up into nine smaller clusters, each the same size, with the energy fluctuations coming out of each one exactly identical.

As much as he wanted to, Nie Tian wasn't able to tell which of them Groete was hiding in, not even with the Heaven Eyes.

It was also true of the giant flame pillar, so it picked one of the demon Qi clusters and struck it.

As soon as it did, that cluster of demon Qi unraveled and turned into wisps of black smoke.

However, soon it regathered and regained its original shape, floating towards Nie Tian once again.

The demon Qi clusters swayed as they traveled forwards, but they shared the same target: Nie Tian.

Then, the Flame Dragon Armor went ahead and shot out more flame pillar towards the nine demon Qi clusters, but they shifted

their positions as they closed in on him. From time to time, they would hide behind the low-tier outsiders and demonized disciples from the Blood sect.

By sacrificing those low-tier troops, they skillfully avoided the Flame Dragon Armor's attacks.

Before long, all nine of them reached the shield of rolling flames created by the Flame Dragon Armor, and exploded one after another, giving rise to heaven-shaking, earth-shattering sounds.

Countless dark spots were sent flying and filled the entire shield of fire, turning it into a strange purple color.

As soon as it did, Groete showed himself and passed through the layer of flames into Nie Tian chaotic magnetic field.

However, the moment he entered, his sinister face grew even more distorted, as he also realized that he was being affected by the strange force within the magnetic field.

Even though he knew that his battle prowess had dropped significantly because of the magnetic field, he had confidence that if that was all there was to it, he would be able to kill Nie Tian rather easily.

With these thoughts, he immediately launched an attack.

# Chapter 207: Eternal Night!

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With one finger, Groete pointed at Nie Tian from afar.

The different types of power interwove with each other in the magnetic field in a disorderly fashion.

The demon Qi that had been included into the magnetic field was gradually distorted and morphed into fine, purple light dots, scattered far away from Nie Tian at the edge of the magnetic field.

However, the moment Groete pointed at him, all the tiny, purple dots seemed to be suddenly attracted by some force.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

They instantly flew out of the magnetic field and converged onto Groete's raised finger. By doing that, they seemed to have strengthened his finger, turning it as sharp as a razor.

As countless purple light dots kept gathering, a purple light ball that was the size of a fist gradually took shape around his finger.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

All of a sudden, strong energy fluctuations were born from within the mysterious, purple light ball.

The incomparably rich demon Qi in the surroundings seemed to be commanded by an unknown force as it madly poured through the flame shield into the chaotic magnetic field from all directions, which then turned into even more fragmentary, purple light dots before flying into the purple light ball around Groete's finger.

It wasn't very long before the fist-sized light ball expanded to the size of a human head.

PUFF!

Groete spit a mouthful of blood towards the purple light ball. The moment his blood merged with the light ball, the entire light ball began to emanate black light.

The black light seemed to have endless life power as it rapidly spread out and painted everything black, including Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field.

It was as if wherever it reached, all light was instantly devoured.

In Nie Tian's sight, the whole world had become pitch-black. He couldn't even see his own hands, much less Groete. All he could see was a cluster of purple light floating not far from him.

Even the power in his magnetic field seemed to be affected by the endless darkness, as all the different types of power separated from one another and couldn't twist together.



“Bloodline power! Eternal Night!” Groete snorted disdainfully, and the formidable power that originated from his bloodline created a cloak of darkness covering a fifty-meter range with Nie Tian at the center.

Sectmaster Li Jing, Shen Xiu, and many other Blood sect disciples saw the frightening magic.

From where they were standing, the area that Nie Tian and Groete were at seemed to be drowned by pitch-black ink. Not a single ray of light could be seen coming out of it.

Even when they tried to examine it with their soul consciousness, they felt disrupted by some mysterious energy and couldn’t sense anything.

Li Jing’s expression flickered. After all, as the sectmaster of the Blood sect, she had certain knowledge regarding the outsider demons.

Generally speaking, their powerful bloodlines could be passed on and inherited.

The more powerful the outsider was, the more powerful their descendants normally would be.

The fact that Sarah and the other high-tier outsiders called Groete “Lord” meant that Groete’s parents must be powerful and lofty outsiders, and thus the bloodline they possessed was probably

also beyond ordinary.

Even though Groete was still young and not as powerful, his bloodline must be superior to the other high-tier outsiders.

As he grew stronger, he would gradually awaken his bloodline and acquire more abilities. If he could enhance his bloodline power to the eighth or ninth level, he would probably become an overlord of the outsiders.

With these thoughts, Li Jing once again began worrying about Nie Tian's safety, fearing that the awakened Groete would possess the power to hurt or even kill Nie Tian.

At that moment, the Bone Blood Demon was still trying to cut through a sea of low-tier outsiders.

There had been roughly more than four hundred low-tier outsiders in the area and it had killed almost a quarter of them.

However, numerous fearless low-tier outsiders still charged towards it, as though they didn't know what death meant. Apparently, their sole purpose was to prevent the Bone Blood Demon from getting close to Nie Tian and Groete for as long as possible, and buy Groete time.

On the other hand, the Flame Dragon Armor was still unleashing raging flame pillars, burning numerous low-tier outsiders alive.

However, it was a spiritual tool after all, so only when commanded by a seasoned master of flame power would it be able to display its might to the fullest.

At this point, Nie Tian was far from being powerful enough to freely control the Flame Dragon Armor. Therefore, the things the Flame Dragon Armor could do for Nie Tian were still limited.

Creating that flame shield around Nie Tian and killing the flood of low-tier outsiders were about it.

If Nie Tian wanted to display more of its formidable power, he would have to put on the Flame Dragon Armor and truly bind their flame power and souls together.

Unfortunately, Nie Tian was only in the Lesser Heaven stage, and thus was not even strong enough to wear it.

As Groete's purple light ball grew larger and more powerful, Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field gradually lost its effect.

Submerged by darkness, Nie Tian could only see a ball of purple light, but soon he found that looking at it made his eyes hurt and tears rolled down his cheeks before he knew it.

He heard the summoning of a mysterious soul from within that purple light ball. A profound voice told him to not hold himself back and walk to it.

Thump!

He slowly took a step closer towards the purple light ball and found the summons coming from it even more irresistible.

However, he had a strange feeling that the moment he walked up to the purple light ball and touched it would be the moment he died.

As that feeling grew more and more intense, he did his utmost to control himself. However, he discovered that he could only slow down his steps, but couldn't stop.

Thump!

Another step was made.

He was one step closer to the only light source in the seemingly endless darkness.

After this step, he completely lost control of his body and what he wanted to do had become pointless.

Devastated, he knew that he only needed to take two more steps to reach the purple light ball, and then he would be devoured by utter darkness.

Only then would he taste the sweet relief of death.

Even though Nie Tian had considered himself to be mentally strong, at that moment, his mental defense had completely broke down and he gave up to destiny.

However, also at that very moment, his heartbeat suddenly accelerated by multiple times, and he seemed to instantly regain a clear mind.

At that moment, he felt like his soul had been suddenly lit up, and he could now see the seven fragmentary stars that hung high in the sky of his soul, emanating light more radiant than ever.

A spray of starlight that could purge the foulness and cleanse the soul poured down from the seven fragmentary stars and filled his entire soul.

He, who was about to make the final steps, suddenly stopped and remained in place like an unwavering mountain, not even moving a muscle.

His blank and bewildered eyes also began to shine with starlight, which seemed to have originated from the seven fragmentary stars in his soul and was now helping him to resist the summons of the purple light ball.

“This is merely an illusion!” Nie Tian finally was able to speak, his eyes shining with bright starlight and raging killing intent.

He lifted his fist and converged his boundless rage on it.

The rage punch he had learned from the mysterious dimension was by far the most powerful technique at his disposal.

With a loud crash, his fist bombarded the purple light ball.

BANG!

The purple light ball exploded, sending out countless fragmentary purple spots, each and every one of them bearing the intention to penetrate his skin, enter his fist, and then follow his arm to his internal organs.

However, a few wisps of dazzling starlight flew out of the vortex of starlight in Nie Tian's dantian.

They seemed to have communicated with the stars in the sky. Moments later, bright spots of starlight rained down from the heavens, shone through the dense, light-blocking demon Qi, and gathered on Nie Tian's body.

The starlight pouring down seemed to have evicted the darkness and purged the demon Qi around Nie Tian.

The dark force originating from the purple light also vanished under the starlight. Clear-minded, Nie Tian was no longer influenced by the dark magic, not even in the slightest.

All of a sudden, Groete's terrified voice echoed out from within the rapidly dissipating darkness, "Fragmentary Star Incantation!"

# Chapter 208: Turning the Situation Around

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From the look of it, being a highborn outsider, Groete knew about the Fragmentary Star Incantation, and that was why when he saw the starlight raining down onto Nie Tian, he looked somewhat scared.

The Blood sect had been enveloped in the dense demon Qi for so long that all the Blood sect survivors had almost forgot what the starry sky looked like. They weren't even sure if the moon, the sun, and the stars still existed.

Seeing the starlight falling from the heavens, penetrating and dispelling the demon Qi, every disciple of the Blood sect had a feeling that the starlight that had poured onto Nie Tian was their hope to get out of the difficult situation.

In their eyes, the starlight was the light of hope!

“Nie Tian!” Li Jing suddenly put a sizable distance between Sarah and herself. Wreathed in a rich bloody aura, she looked at Nie Tian, eyes filled with shock.

She was the only Qi warrior in the Blood sect who had reached the Profound realm, so her understanding of the starlight was much better than all the other Blood sect members.

As strong and resourceful as she was, when the Blood sect had been engulfed by the dense demon Qi, she found herself at the end of her wits.



However, the starlight pouring down from the heavens at this very moment carried a mysterious power that could cleanse the demon Qi.

This power was completely new to her, and it went beyond even her understanding.

Furthermore, she didn't think it was Wu Ji who had passed this miraculous incantation to Nie Tian.

If he had such a powerful incantation at his disposal, the Cloudsoaring sect wouldn't be in a similar situation as the Blood sect, struggling to stay afloat.

“Spirit Channeling grade treasure, mysterious incantation... Is he really Wu Ji's disciple?” Li Jing couldn't help but wonder.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

As soon as the flood of starlight shone on the dense demon Qi, the demon Qi dissipated as rapidly as if it had been set on fire.

Moments later, a ten-meter range, with Nie Tian being the center, was demon Qi-free.

Having lost his chaotic magnetic field, Nie Tian stood in the center of the starlight-lit area, a confused expression on his face.

On the other hand, Groete had already quietly gotten away from Nie Tian as soon as his purple light ball exploded and the starlight started cleansing the demon Qi.

At that moment, Groete was hiding away within another cluster of dense demon Qi, looking deeply at Nie Tian with his purple, devilish eyes, as if he was trying to see through all the secrets in Nie Tian.

What he didn't know was that after destroying the purple light ball with the rage punch, Nie Tian was actually in a terrible state.

The rage punch had almost drained all of his power.

WHOOSH!

All of a sudden, a ball of flame whizzed over, dragging a long, burning tail, and stopped one meter in front of Nie Tian.

After the flames gradually went out, the Flame Dragon Armor showed itself.

CRUNCH! CRUNCH!

The sounds of heavy things crashing into the ground rang out from behind Nie Tian.

Along with those sounds came the screams of low-tier outsiders and blood-spurting sounds.

By destroying the purple light ball and channeling starlight from the heavens, Nie Tian had bought the Bone Blood Demon enough time to break through the blockade.

Seconds later, the Bone Blood Demon, whose body had turned red from the bloodbath, arrived by Nie Tian's side.

Emanating a dreadful, bloody aura, the Bone Blood Demon stood back to back with Nie Tian. It constantly swung its gigantic bony hands, tearing the incoming roaring low-tier outsiders into shreds.

Before long, the bodies of the dead low-tier outsiders piled up into a hill in front of the Bone Blood Demon.

More and more purple blood kept streaming out of the mangled bodies and soon the ground was covered in it.

“Your highness!” Sarah called out to Groete. As she turned her curvaceous body, numerous thorns grew out of her, and then she whizzed towards Li Jing.

The blood-colored lotus Li Jing sat on seemed as if it was made of blood crystal, inside of which blood shadows constantly flashed about.

She felt greatly relieved after seeing that the Bone Blood Demon

had reached Nie Tian's side and was now cutting down wave after wave of low-tier outsiders to keep him safe.

At that moment, the voices of Feng Luo, Hong Can, Li Fan, and Zou Yi rang out from afar.

“Sectmaster!”

“Senior Li!”

“We're here!”

After spending some time to replenish their power with spirit stones, they finally made it to the central square of the Blood sect.

“Your highness!” Sarah's voice echoed out again. It seemed she didn't dare to tell Groete what to do, so she just called out his name.

She also feared that she might irritate him and make him act rashly by advising him.

She only wanted to inform him that now that Feng Luo and the others had arrived, according to her assessment of the situation, their operation to sack the Blood sect was already destined to fail.

Furthermore, she had witnessed Groete awaken his own bloodline power and cast the Eternal Night spell, but fail to kill Nie

Tian before the Bone Blood Demon rushed to his side.

As a high-tier outsider herself, she had a perfect idea of how consuming the demonizing process could be.

She knew that Groete must have lost a significant amount of his vital energy and needed to recuperate as soon as possible. In his current condition, he couldn't fight another battle.

On the other hand, the Bone Blood Demon had slaughtered more than two hundred low-tier outsiders by now, and it had accumulated its flesh power to a terrifying level.

Even she lacked the confidence to overtake the Bone Blood Demon at this point. And that was not to mention the fact that she would need to get through Li Jing first.

However, the most unbearable thing for her was that the demon Qi in the area was rapidly dissipating due to the starlight Nie Tian had brought down from the heavens.

All these unfavorable factors had made Sarah realize that if they continued to fight, they would become the losing side.

That was why she had warned Groete of the situation twice...

Meanwhile, Groete didn't lose his clear mind. With one sharp screech, he commanded all the remaining low-tier outsiders to attack the Blood sect disciples as well as Hong Can and the others

who had just arrived. Then he shouted in their language, “Retreat!”

Upon hearing his order, the other five high-tier outsiders, including Sarah, immediately pulled back and dashed to his side.

They formed a circle around Groete before they leapt into the air and flew away in the dense demon Qi.

After receiving Groete’s order, all the low-tier outsiders let out mad roars as they charged toward the human Qi warriors.

After all, in the eyes of Groete and Sarah, the low-tier outsiders were nothing more than expendable tools that they could sacrifice to buy enough time for them to retreat.

By the time they were quite some distance from the Blood sect, Groete let out another screech.

Only then did the frenzied low-tier outsiders stopped attacking and flee in all directions.

“Chase after them! Kill as many as you can!” Sitting on top of her blood-colored lotus, Li Jing gave the order, commanding those who were strong enough to resist the demon Qi to hunt down the fleeing low-tier outsiders.

Now that their commanders were gone, Li Jing was confident that they would be able to finish off the remaining two hundred

outsider minions.

As the other Blood sect experts chased after the fleeing low-tier outsiders, Li Jing remained in place.

Neither did she chase after the low-tier outsiders, nor did she go after Groete and the high-tier outsiders.

The reason was that Nie Tian didn't make a move either, and the Bone Blood Demon was standing right next to him like a faithful guard.

She knew in her heart that the Bone Blood Demon was what had caused the high-tier outsiders to leave.

WHOOSH!

The scarlet lotus traveled through the dissipating demon Qi to the cleansed, lit-up area where Nie Tian was standing.

Upon arriving at the purged area, the bloody aura that had been wreathing Li Jing immediately dissipated, and only then did Nie Tian get a clear view of her face.

Floating in front of him was a woman in her thirties. The way she wore her makeup and the way she dressed made her look especially elegant.

She was wearing a long, rose-red dress and her curvaceous thighs were crossed as she sat atop the blood-colored lotus. Since she had canceled the spell, her scarlet pupils had resumed their original, black color.

Grabbing the lower part of her dress with one hand, she rose to her feet in a slow, graceful fashion.

The blood-colored lotus gradually descended and, when it was half a meter from the ground, she gently stepped down from the lotus.

With a wave of her hand, the lotus that seemed to be made of blood jade rapidly shrunk to the size of a fist and flew into the ring on her left ring finger.

“Sectmaster!” Feng Luo from the Blood sect wanted to explain how the Bone Blood Demon had awakened and why they had been delayed.

Li Jing gently raised her left hand.

Feng Luo immediately sealed his lips and bowed in a respectful way before turning around and joining the others in hunting down the fleeing low-tier outsiders.

At that moment, Li Fan from the Cloudsoaring sect quietly stepped into the starlight-lit area where Nie Tian was standing.



With a serious and reverent look in his eyes, Li Fan looked at Li Jing from behind.

The elegant woman in front of her was among the few Qi warriors who stood on top of the cultivation pyramid in the Realm of Flame Heaven.

He had heard many rumors about her and knew that not only was she cruel and merciless, she was also famous for her moodiness. Even the slightest disagreement might make her go berserk and start killing.

However, it was thanks to her bold decisions that the Blood sect had prospered during the recent years.

The fact that she remained in place instead of venting her anger upon the fleeing minions had somehow made Li Fan worry.

Li Fan wondered what her next move would be. After all, she had never been one to follow the rules.

“Senior...” As soon as Li Fan uttered the first word, he found his own voice a bit funny. After laboring to calm himself, he cleared his throat and said, “Nie Tian is my martial granduncle’s disciple. Even though he somehow controlled the Bone Blood Demon your sect put heart and soul into, he played an important role in raising the siege of your sect.

“He’s still young and unseasoned. I hope you can give face to my

martial granduncle and go easy on him,” Li Fan pleaded.

“You think I was going to punish him?” said Li Jing, not even turning her head back.

“Oh? So what do you intend to do with him then?” Li Fan said, puzzled.

“Now that he has awakened the Bone Blood Demon and become the master of our sect’s most valuable Blood Demon, he’s a member of the Blood sect.” Staring into Nie Tian’s eyes, Li Jing continued, “You can tell Wu Ji later that he’s no longer a member of the Cloudsoaring sect.”

“What?! You can’t mean that!” Li Fan stood aghast.

## Chapter 209: Stealing a Disciple

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“Why not?” Li Jing finally turned her head back and looked at Li Fan with a meaningful look in her eyes. She pursed her lips into a smile and said softly, “I didn’t even see the least bit of the Cloudsoaring sect in Nie Tian. I bet Eccentric Wu didn’t pass any Cloudsoaring sect incantations to him.”

After a brief pause, she continued with a smile, “On the contrary, I sensed a hint of our sect’s aura on him. I can say for sure that he has some kind of connection with our sect.”

During the Green Illusion dimension trial, Yu Tong had used the Earth Web incantation to pierce countless blood strings into Nie Tian’s flesh.

However, Nie Tian had somehow managed to pull all the blood strings into his body and refine them into his own blood.

As the sectmaster of the Blood sect, no one had a better mastery of all the Blood sect’s forbidden techniques, therefore she keenly sensed that Nie Tian had the Blood sect’s aura on him.

She was certain that the reason why Nie Tian had been able to awaken the Bone Blood Demon must have had something to do with the Blood sect’s aura flowing in his veins, aside from the life power he had passed onto it.

The smile on Li Fan’s face was a bit unnatural as he said, “Nie Tian has already officially made my martial granduncle his master.

Everyone knows that.”

“So what?” Li Jing blurted in an indifferent fashion, “It won’t be a problem as long as Eccentric Wu lets him go. He has already proven his teaching ability with his two other disciples. Plus, now that his lifespan is limited, I’m afraid he won’t have much time left to guide Nie Tian anyways. However, the Blood sect and I can give Nie Tian what he can’t!”

Before Li Fan could say anything back, Li Jing let out a cold harrumph and continued, “Furthermore, the Blood sect has poured endless time and resources into that Bone Blood Demon. You have witnessed its strength yourself, and now it only takes orders from Nie Tian. Do you think I’ll let it go back to the Cloudsoaring sect with him?”

Li Fan’s face grew serious. “But it was Nie Tian who lifted the siege of the Blood sect!”

“That’s not enough!” Li Jing said with a domineering tone. “If you think I’ll let the person who controls the Bone Blood Demon leave, you might as well stop dreaming! Either he leaves the Cloudsoaring sect and joins the Blood sect, or I kill him and free the Bone Blood Demon from his control.

“Say no more, Li Fan. Go tell Eccentric Wu that I’ll have Nie Tian, one way or another!”

With a wave of her hand, a cluster of bloody aura flew over. It enveloped Li Fan, who was just about to say something, and flew

away, not giving him the chance to protest.

After Li Fan disappeared in the distant sky, she once again looked at Nie Tian, her eyes glittering with bright light.

“Eccentric Wu is indeed a good judge of talent.” She thought to herself. “This kid is perfect for practicing our sect’s secret magics. Now that you’ve awakened the Bone Blood Demon, you and our sect are connected by destiny. Sorry, Eccentric Wu...”

She was bent on making Nie Tian a disciple of the Blood sect.

At that moment, Nie Tian was sitting on the ground, recuperating with spirit stones.

The rage punch had almost drained all the power in his dantian’s spiritual sea. What he needed the most at this point was to recover his strength at the fastest speed possible, so as to cope with the complicated, ever-changing situation in the Realm of Flame Heaven.

As he absorbed spiritual power from the spirit stones, starlight continued to fall through the dissipating demon Qi and converge on him.

He examined his spiritual sea and saw that the starlight he was taking in was gradually flowing into the vortex of starlight.

At that moment, he had a faint feeling that a mysterious

connection between him and a dimension very far away had been established and was strengthening.

It was through that connection that the starlight, which was pure and carried the miraculous power of purging the demon Qi, had fallen from the heavens and converged on him.

As the starlight continued to fall, not only the demon Qi in Nie Tian's surrounding areas, but even the demon Qi in further areas gradually dissipated.

Of course, since the high-tier outsiders had evacuated the place and the low-tier outsiders had fled the area, the density of the demon Qi was already on the decline.

It was the starlight that had sped up the process.

Moments later, a large area with Nie Tian at the center became completely demon Qi-free and the previously blocked sky could be seen again.

Everyone in the area looked up and saw the starlit sky. Among all the stars, one seemed to shine especially brilliantly.

Now that the demon Qi in the central square had dissipated, the weaker Blood sect disciples, who had been hiding behind the scarlet light shield, walked out into the clean air with sighs of relief.

The gigantic blood shadow also shrunk under Li Jing's soul's command.

SHEW!

The blood shadow suddenly turned into a flash of blood-colored light before disappearing into the ring on Li Jing's finger.

A while passed and all the demon Qi that had gathered in the Blood sect dissipated, and the Blood sect was once again showered with silver moonlight.

Numerous Blood sect disciples with low cultivation bases looked up at the starlit sky, which seemed now brighter than ever, sighing over their survival.

“It was so close.”

“It's finally over.”

“I didn't expect that we'd see the sky again.”

“We've lived through this calamity and we're safe for now. But I wonder when the wars in the Realm of Flame Heaven will end...”

BOOM!

The Bone Blood Demon, who had been standing by Nie Tian's side like a guardian, suddenly collapsed to the ground.

Upon the loud crash, purple-colored blood spilled all over the place.

The sound had attracted almost every Blood sect disciples' attention while Li Jing, who was standing right next to Nie Tian, was the first to make a move.

In the next moment, Li Jing was already standing on top of the Bone Blood Demon's ribcage.

She slowly crouched down and placed her ring-bearing left hand on the Bone Blood Demon's huge heart. Upon contact, numerous wisps of blood-colored light instantly flew out of her slender fingers and into the heart.

With a secret magic of the Blood sect, she carefully examined it.

A moment later, she said with a slight frown, "It has run out of life power. Without a power source, it can only fall into a deep slumber again. Only by infusing it with more life power will we be able to bring it back to life again..."

Her gaze shifted from the Bone Blood Demon to Nie Tian, a complicated expression on her face.

She knew perfectly well that she would have to rely on Nie Tian



to revive the Bone Blood Demon. Nothing she did would make a difference.

Nie Tian was the only one who could awaken the Bone Blood Demon and put it to use.

She sensed that even though the Bone Blood Demon was now in a slumber, the outsider blood it had absorbed using the Blood Refining Incantation was still running through its veins.

The aura of flesh and blood that it kept exuding was also significantly intenser than before.

It seemed that all the spirit beast blood they had used on it was nowhere near as helpful as the outsider blood it had absorbed on its own.

Perhaps only Blood Demons created from powerful, alien races would be able to enhance themselves via such methods.

“Perhaps, it still has room to grow. As long as it can keep absorbing power from flesh and blood, it may even awaken its Bone Giant bloodline power some day.

“It’s safe to say that the Blood sect has never seen a Blood Demon like this since its founding day.

“Not to mention in the Realm of Flame Heaven, even in the other more powerful realms, a fully awakened Blood Demon with a level

eight bloodline power would be considered as an ultimate weapon!

“We can’t lose such a formidable weapon to the Cloudsoaring sect! We must have it!”

Li Jing secretly made up her mind. She was bent on keeping Nie Tian in the Blood sect, even though it meant that she would make Wu Ji her enemy and disrupt the current alliance between the seven sects.

Time passed quickly.

All the Blood sect disciples who had chased after the fleeing low-tier outsiders, returned in triumph.

Only a couple of them returned in low spirits as they didn’t get to kill any low-tier outsiders.

Among the crowd, Li Jing even saw Yu Tong, Jiang Lingzhu, An Shiyi, and Zheng Bin. Apparently, they had rushed to this place after seeing that the demon Qi had lifted, and met the returning Blood sect disciples on their way.

At first glance, Jiang Lingzhu and An Shiyi caught sight of Nie Tian, who was now recuperating with his eyes closed.

Without any hesitation, they rushed towards him. However, as they approached, they saw sectmaster Li Jing, and came to a stop.

“Senior Li...” Timidness filled their eyes as the two of them bowed to Li Jing from afar, wondering why she was standing beside Nie Tian.

Actually, neither of them had met Li Jing in person before, but the suffocating aura she unleashed made them certain that the elegant, well-dressed woman in front of them was none other than the famous, fierce woman from the Blood sect.

Since they had both heard terrifying rumors about her, they behaved very cautiously, fearing that they might unwittingly offend her.

Li Jing examined the two of them with her fierce eyes before saying with a plain tone, “Who are you to him?”

“Umm, he’s my martial uncle. My father is Jiang Zhisu.” Jiang Lingzhu sounded intimidated.

“I’m his sworn sister,” said An Shiyi.

“Jiang Zhisu’s precious daughter...” Li Jing shot Jiang Lingzhu another glance before she nodded and said, “From now on, Nie Tian is no longer your martial uncle. He’s a member of the Blood sect. You can tell your father that I’ve demanded him from the Cloudsoaring sect when you get back.”

She didn’t even bother to talk to An Shiyi. Instead, she walked

away from Nie Tian.

“He’s recuperating. You can stay by his side and watch him, but don’t try to wake him.” Her voice echoed out from the distance while she was already nowhere to be seen.

Jiang Lingzhu’s expression flickered. “A member of the Blood sect?!” Her gaze shifted between Nie Tian, who was cultivating with his eyes closed, and the direction where Li Jing’s voice had come from, confused about what had happened in this place.

An Shiyi’s face was also filled with confusion as she stared blankly at Nie Tian.

Yu Tong, who was standing in a respectful fashion beside Shen Xiu, apologized, “I’m sorry, sectmaster. I failed to arrive in time to help defend the sect.”

“You did well,” Li Jing said casually, as it seemed that she also knew the things that had happened between Nie Tian and her. “From today on, Nie Tian is your junior martial brother, and I need you to forget about all your enmity towards him.”

“What?!” Yu Tong was flabbergasted.

## Chapter 210: Key Factor

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With a slight frown, Li Jing said, “You didn’t hear me? Okay, I’ll say it one more time. From now on, Nie Tian will be your junior martial brother, and you’ll forget about the things that happened between you and him.”

Yu Tong bowed her head in silence for a while before replying, “Got it.”

“Good.” Li Jing said no more.

Under the starlit sky, Yu Tong’s shoulders couldn’t stop from shivering. Apparently, Li Jing’s decision had greatly shaken her.

However, she didn’t dare to disobey or argue with her. She could only do as she was bid.

After all, she had a very good idea of what kind of person the sectmaster was and what punishment she would face if she dared to go against her orders.

She could only try to slowly forget the unpleasant incidents between her and Nie Tian.

Her master, Shen Xiu, had noted her sorrow and indignation. She touched her head and said softly, “Kiddo, Nie Tian has become an important asset of our sect. I heard something about the things that happened between you and him, but the moment he

awakened the Bone Blood Demon, he was bound to become one of us.”

After all, Shen Xiu had had gone through winds and waves with Li Jing. She understood that now that she had made up her mind, no one’s feelings would change her mind, no matter whose.

After giving the order to Yu Tong, Li Jing turned to look at Hong Can, Zou Yi, and the others.

Under her suggesting gaze, all the disciples from the other sects gathered by her side, including Li Fan, who she had released and returned to the Blood sect with the others.

Even Hong Can, who was from the Hell sect, spoke to her very carefully. “Sectmaster Li, could you tell us what happened to the Realm of Flame Heaven during the time we were gone?”

Upon hearing Hong Can’s words, the expressions of all those who had returned from the Heaven Gate trial turned grim and concerned. A subdued mood rapidly spread out among them.

“Terrible things,” Li Jing said with a plain tone.

Then she went on and briefly explained to them about the war between the seven sects and the foreign invaders.

Not long after Hong Can and the others had entered the Heaven Gate, it disappeared. However, at the same time, a large amount of

outsiders swarmed into the Realm of Flame Heaven via opened spacial rifts; most of them were low-tier, but there were also a few high-tier ones.

However, knowing that their Demon Trapping Purgatory Formation had broken down and outsider demons would soon invade the realm via those spacial rifts, the Hell sect had evacuated before they arrived.

Most of their powerful experts had been scattered in their affiliated cities, while others had gone to the Ghost sect.

Experts from the other six sects had also learned that the Demon Trapping Purgatory Formation had lost its effect and realized that they wouldn't have walls to stay behind if they chose to defend the Hell sect. Therefore, they had returned to their respective sects.

That way, not only would they be able to contend with the outsiders with the help of their grand, sect-protecting spell formations, but they could also shelter the clans that clung to them.

As they had expected, soon enough, countless outsiders had flooded the Realm of Flame Heaven, spreading out to attack all the sects and sending some of their best warriors to the cities where the experts from the Hell sect had held fast.

The war between the outsiders and the seven sects immediately unfurled and spread out to every corner of the Realm of Flame Heaven.

Later, when the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth was polluted and demon Qi inundated some parts of the realm, the teleportation portals lost their effect.

Communication between the seven sects had grown increasingly difficult. As time passed, they gradually lost contact with one another.

For example, when the Blood sect had been besieged by outsiders, they found it harder and harder to receive information from the other sects.

The latest news they had received said that the Grayvale sect had already been sacked by the invading outsiders; most of their Qi warriors had died by the outsiders' hands with only a few successfully breaking through the siege, whose whereabouts unknown.

Since some powerful experts from the Hell sect had joined the defense of the Ghost sect, they had been in a stalemate with the main force of the outsider army.

Meanwhile, since the Spiritual Treasure sect had lost their Heaven Burning Earth Flame Formation, they had no choice but to go to the Cloudsoaring sect and join their camp.

On the other hand, since the Mystic Mist sect wasn't as strong as the other sects, the outsiders hadn't deployed much of their force to attack them, and thus they were currently able to defend



themselves.

However, everyone knew that the main force of the outsider army had been deployed to the Ghost sect.

Once the Ghost sect lost their battle, the elite outsider troops would march on to the Mystic Mist sect and Cloudsoaring sect.

If it came down to that, the Mystic Mist sect and Cloudsoaring sect wouldn't even be able to last a day.

Great powers in the other realms knew perfectly well what was going on in the Realm of Flame Heaven, but none of them had answered the Hell sect's request for assistance.

As human Qi warriors with similar origins, the indifference of the powerful experts from the other eight realms had made the Hell sect fume with rage. However, there was nothing they could do about it.

With a plain tone, Li Jing gave a detailed explanation of the current situation of the other sects. Then she continued, "Our sect has also suffered great losses, but thanks to the awakening of the Bone Blood Demon, we escaped our doom.

"The seven sects stand and fall as one now.

"Even though we forced the outsiders to retreat this time, we didn't hurt their foundation. All those we've killed were low-tier

foot soldiers.

“We’ll recuperate as quickly as possible and then I’ll lead some of our Greater Heaven stage and Worldly realm experts to support the Ghost sect.

“As long as the Ghost sect can hold fast or even better, defeat their enemies, the Realm of Flame Heaven will most likely live through this calamity.

“Furthermore, I doubt that the outsiders will go all-out to seize the Realm of Flame Heaven and make it their home again.

“They must also know that if they actually send all their troops to this war, the other eight realms will sense the threat and probably won’t stand by any more.

“So this is more like a retaliation!

“Both the outsiders and the human Qi warriors of the Domain of the Falling Stars have their own worries. I believe this invasion of the Realm of Flame Heaven is only the beginning.”

Li Jing suddenly stopped and turned to look at Nie Tian.

Facing Nie Tian, she said to Li Fan, “The reason I need to keep Nie Tian in the Blood sect is that, although he can now control the Bone Blood Demon, he still hasn’t fully awakened it and its true strength is still yet to be displayed.

“If he wants to do that, he’ll have to learn some of the Blood sect’s secret magics.

“Magics that only disciples of the Blood sect are eligible to learn!

“I guarantee you that after he joins our sect and practices those secret magics, he’ll soon become as powerful as a Profound realm expert! And his Bone Blood Demon will be able to more efficiently enhance its strength through the Blood Refining Incantation. Given time, it would grow to be the most powerful weapon we can use to defeat the outsider invaders!

“I believe Wu Ji would accept it if him losing a disciple could restore peace and safety to the Realm of Flame Heaven.”

Only until now did Li Jing turn to look at Li Fan in the eyes and say with a soft tone, “I hope you can explain my intentions with Nie Tian to your master when you go back to the Cloudsoaring sect or find a way to contact him. Times are different. Nie Tian has become a crucial factor as to whether we’ll be able to turn the situation around and save the Realm of Flame Heaven. I promise that as long as he joins the Blood sect, I’ll personally pass our secret magics to him and not hold anything back.”

“Alright. I’ll pass your message to my master,” Li Fan said in a low voice.

After hearing Li Jing’s explanation, he now had a better understanding as to why she insisted on making Nie Tian a Blood

sect disciple.

“I hope Nie Tian will tell me that he’ll be able to awaken the Bone Blood Demon from its slumber again.” Li Jing also shut her eyes after these words.

Upon hearing these words, everyone’s gaze shifted to Nie Tian.

None of them had ever expected that Nie Tian, who had made great gains during the Heaven Gate trial, would become such a key factor after returning to the Realm of Flame Heaven.

With measuring gazes, they looked deeply at Nie Tian, who was still in the middle of his cultivation.

Not only was he refilling his vortex of spiritual power with the power he had absorbed from the spirit stones, but he was also channeling the falling starlight into his rapidly-rotating vortex of starlight.

When he had a feeling that his spiritual power was almost fully restored, he unleashed a wisp of his psychic awareness to examine the hexagram tattooed on his chest.

As soon as it entered the hexagram, the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation unfurled in front of his eyes, every single symbol incomparably clear. Without any hesitation, he started learning them by heart and contemplating the profound truths they contained.

It wasn't long before he was lost in the sea of fascinating mysteries.

Meanwhile, he also sensed that his psychic power was rapidly emptying as the learning went on.

# Chapter 211: Good Faith

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It wasn't very long before Nie Tian realized that he had lost more than half of his psychic power, and thus retracted the wisp of his psychic awareness from the hexagram.

However, during this period of learning and contemplation, he had mastered the basics and could practice the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

Then, he once again focused his attention on channeling the falling starlight into the vortex of starlight in his spiritual sea.

The rotation of the vortex of starlight wasn't regular at all; sometimes it sped up and sometimes it slowed down. Sometimes, it even reversed and rotated in the other direction.

The fragments of the starlight seemed to be refined in their own mysterious way. In any case, it grew purer and purer. Once in awhile, a drop of liquidized starlight would form at the bottom of the vortex of starlight.

The way the vortex of starlight worked was completely different from the other vortexes in his spiritual sea. When he practiced the Qi Refining Incantation, the spiritual energy he brought in would go through rounds of refinement and then flow to the far edge of his spiritual sea, and gradually build up towards the center.

Cultivation at the Lesser Heaven stage was about continuously refining spiritual energy and filling the spiritual sea with the

misty, refined spiritual energy.

However, the starlight Nie Tian had channeled into his vortex of starlight via the Fragmentary Star Incantation turned into liquid stardew after refinement.

The stardew seemed fundamentally different from the misty spiritual power, as within it seemed to lay more mysteries and secrets.

As time went by, more and more drops of stardew were formed at the bottom of the vortex of starlight and soon gathered into a small pool of stardew.

Time passed quickly. Soon the curtain of night began to rise, and daybreak was at hand.

By first light of the day, Nie Tian could still channel a trivial amount of starlight into his vortex of starlight, but the efficiency had been greatly reduced.

By the time the sun was high in the sky, the starlight he could receive was next to none.

Only then did he finally awake from his cultivation and stop his contemplation of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

He examined himself with his soul and found that he had recovered most of his spiritual power.

It seemed that the shallow stardew pool in his vortex of starlight could also be used as a source of power at any time now.

It was just that he had consumed most of his psychic power just to go through very little of the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation. He only learned how to create the stardew, but not how to use it.

Furthermore, the learning and contemplation had consumed a significant amount of his psychic power.

An Shiyi, who was sitting next to him, was the first one to notice his awaking. She immediately stopped her cultivation and turned to look at him with a charming smile on her face. “You’re finally awake!”

In her hands were a few spirit stones. Apparently, she was in the middle of recuperation herself.

After hearing her words, Jiang Lingzhu also opened her eyes. She looked at Nie Tian with her still-misted eyes before looking up and saying, “Wow, it’s already morning.”

Unlike An Shiyi, Jiang Lingzhu hadn’t been recovering with spirit stones. Rather, she had actually fallen asleep during her cultivation.

Ever since she had returned from the Heaven Gate trial, she



hadn't had much time to rest; the intense demon Qi and fierce outsiders had done a number on her.

She could only restore a clear mind via a deep slumber.

“Yeah, I'm glad that you guys are alright.” With a smile, Nie Tian glanced around and saw that Hong Can, Feng Luo, Li Fan, and other survivors of the Heaven Gate trial were gathered around Li Jing, explaining to her the things that had taken place in the Heaven Gate, while she silently sat in the middle.

Yu Tong was sitting right beside her master, Shen Xiu, but she seemed to be paying attention to Nie Tian the whole time.

The moment Nie Tian woke up, she noticed it and instantly shot a glance at him with a complicated expression on her face.

The Blood sect disciples with low cultivation bases could be seen around the sect, clearing up the battlefield.

Dilapidated walls and scattered rocks could be seen at every corner of the Blood sect, underneath some of which dead bodies of low-tier outsider and Blood sect disciples could be seen.

The cleaners' faces were all ghastly as they bore the pain while doing the work. Some even burst into tears as they did.

However, most of the Greater Heaven stage experts had no expressions on their faces as they seemed to be rather used to

fellow sect members dying.

All those who gathered around Li Jing looked quite indifferent. Apparently, they weren't shaken by the loss their sect had suffered.

After glancing around, Nie Tian looked over his shoulder and saw the Bone Blood Demon lying on the ground. Even though he could still sense a strong aura rising from it, there was no longer any sign of life fluctuations.

He then realized that the Bone Blood Demon had used up the life power he had infused into its heart while he was recuperating.

If he wanted to awaken it again, he would have to apply the same method.

With these thoughts, he silently took out a few chunks of spirit beast meat from his bracelet of holding and started munching.

The spirit beast meat contained rich life power, and by consuming it, he would be able to rapidly recover the life power he had lost by dripping his blood onto the Bone Blood Demon's heart.

“Li Fan, you may now go and talk to Nie Tian,” Li Jing blurted. “And after that, you're welcome to stay in the Blood sect or take Jiang Lingzhu and leave.”

Surprised, Li Fan turned around and saw Nie Tian awake. He

rose to his feet and walked to Nie Tian's side before saying, "Nie Tian, your awakening of the Bone Blood Demon caused you some trouble. Senior Li demands that you become a disciple of the Blood sect and that I go back to the Cloudsoaring sect to deliver her message."

With these words, Li Fan heaved a sigh and continued, "I'll inform my master and martial granduncle when I get back and see what they decide."

"What?!" Nie Tian expression flickered. "She wants me to join the Blood sect?"

Li Fan smiled bitterly. "The Bone Blood Demon is too important to the Blood sect. She would never allow you, its controller, to return to the Cloudsoaring sect with it. The Bone Blood Demon may even change the course of the war and determine the destiny of the Realm of Flame Heaven, so..."

He shook his head and said disheartedly, "Truth be told, I'm afraid your master may agree to her offer if it can really turn the situation around."

Nie Tian was at a loss for words.

Jiang Lingzhu, who was sitting beside him, bowed her head and didn't say a word.

Even she understood that Li Jing's proposal was very hard to

refuse when the survival of the entire realm that was at stake.

After learning from Li Fan that the entire Realm of Flame Heaven was in danger, the first thing that came to Nie Tian's mind was the safety of his grandfather and aunt, since they were the most important ones to him. "If the outsiders sack the Realm of Flame Heaven, what will happen to Black Cloud City?"

He also cared a great deal about Wu Ji, but he was fairly certain that, considering his level of strength, he would be able to save himself even if the Realm of Flame Heaven fell.

What he worried the most was that Black Cloud City would be ravaged by low-tier outsiders and Nie Donghai and Nie Qian be killed.

"I don't know." Li Fan's eyebrows were deeply furrowed. "But I can assure you that I'll do everything within my power to search for your grandfather and aunt on my way back to the Cloudsoaring sect, and I'll do my best to keep them safe."

After a brief pause, Li Fan added, "If they're still alive."

Nie Tian's expression turned grim. He pondered for a moment before taking all the cultivation materials he had looted from the foreign Qi warriors out of his bracelet of holding and laying them in front of Li Fan. He said, "These things won't help me much. Now that I'll stay here for god knows how long, I want you to take these things back and consider them as my humble contribution to the Cloudsoaring sect."

After looking deeply into his eyes for a few seconds, Li Fan put all the items away and said, “Staying here isn’t necessarily a bad thing for you. For all I know, you’ll have your chance to return to the Cloudsoaring sect when the Realm of Flame Heaven is safe again. I need to take Lingzhu back now. You take care!”

“You too, Uncle Li,” Nie Tian said.

“I will.” Li Fan beckoned for Jiang Lingzhu to leave with him.

At that very moment, Li Jing turned to Shen Xiu and said, “Elder Sister Shen, I need you to escort them back to the Cloudsoaring sect. Also, help Li Fan find Nie Tian’s two kin in Black Cloud City. Keep them safe and bring them back to the Blood sect.”

It seemed that she had overheard every word of Nie Tian and Li Fan’s conversation.

Shen Xiu also rose to her feet. “Understood.”

Seeing that Li Fan and Jiang Lingzhu were leaving, An Shiyi rose from Nie Tian’s side and said with her face filled with reluctance, “I’ll go with you.”

Li Fan shook his head and said, “There’s no need; the Blood sect has just fought off a wave of outsiders, so I believe this is probably the safest place in the Realm of Flame Heaven right now. Even though the survivors of the Spiritual Treasure sect are now helping

defend the Cloudsoaring sect, it won't be easy to get through the outsiders' siege and into the Cloudsoaring sect."

"But my clan is also in Black Cloud City," said An Shiyi.

Li Fan went blank for a moment before he said, "Fine."

He knew that An Shiyi was worried about the An clan and her sister An Ying. Although he knew the way back would be full of terror, he didn't think he would be able to talk An Shiyi out of it.

Nie Tian also knew that she had made up her mind, so he said with a serious tone, "Take care of yourself, sister. We'll meet again soon."

An Shiyi's eyes lit up. "You too."

"As our sectmaster commands, I'll escort you to the Cloudsoaring sect." Shen Xiu slowly descended in front of Nie Tian. Looking at him, she said, "As long as your grandfather and aunt are still alive, I'll find them and bring them back here."

Nie Tian rose to his feet and bowed respectfully. "Many thanks!"

He had heard that Shen Xiu's strength was second only to Li Jing in the Blood sect. Now that she had given him her word, he was quite confident that she would be able to deliver.

As long as his grandfather and aunt were still alive, Shen Xiu would most likely secure them and bring them back.

The Blood sect showed their willingness to go to great lengths to erase his worries and make him stay in the Blood sect.

Immediately after she finished talking, Shen Xiu led Li Fan, An Shiyi, and Jiang Lingzhu as they walked out of the Blood sect. Qiu Heng from the Spiritual Treasure sect tailed them.

The disciples of the Mystic Mist sect also left the Blood sect and headed to their sect.

Only the disciples of the Grayvale sect chose to stay in the Blood sect, knowing that their sect had already been sacked.

Hong Can from the Hell sect and Zou Yi from the Ghost sect planned to spend the next two days recovering their strength and then join the defense over at the Ghost sect.

After everything was settled, the Blood sect returned to peace. Some disciples of the Blood sect spread out to collect blood from the outsiders' corpses, in preparation of reforming the grand, sect-protecting spell formation.

Wearing a long dress, Li Jing walked gracefully to Nie Tian's side and said, "Now I'll teach you the Demon Driving Incantation, which will allow you to gain true control of the Bone Blood Demon."

## Chapter 212: Demon Driving Incantation

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When Li Jing moved her fiery-red lips and started telling Nie Tian about the Demon Driving Incantation, everyone voluntarily vacated the area, including the disciples from the Grayvale sect and Ghost sect.

Even if they wanted to overhear what was being said, they wouldn't be able to hear a word since Li Jing had already sound-proofed the area where Nie Tian and she were in.

Slowly and softly, she lectured to Nie Tian about the wonders and secrets of the Demon Driving Incantation.

Nie Tian didn't say anything and quietly memorized every word that came out of her mouth. Later, when Li Jing explained the cultivation method word by word, he occasionally raised his questions.

Li Jing spent a whole morning elaborating on the Demon Driving Incantation to Nie Tian.

At noon, Li Jing finally finished her lesson and, looking at Nie Tian with her piercing eyes, she said, "You'll have two days to contemplate the incantation, and in the meantime, you can come to me whenever you run into points where you don't understand. We'll set out to the Ghost sect in two days and I'll need you to awaken the Bone Blood Demon the same way you did. And then, we'll use it to kill outsider invaders and save the Ghost sect."



“Alright.” Nie Tian nodded.

“So this is it for today.” She pondered for a moment before the ring on her finger suddenly shone with a bright light. In the next moment, four Soul Restoring Pills appeared in her palm. “I heard that you had outstanding tolerance for the strong medicinal efficacy of the Soul Restoring Pills. Here. You can use them to recover your psychic power.”

She handed over the Soul Restoring Pills as she spoke.

“Thank you.” Without any hesitation, Nie Tian grabbed the pills and swallowed them all at once.

Currently, he had fully restored his spiritual power and his flesh power was also growing back bit by bit as he digested the spirit beast meat. Only his psychic power, which he had consumed a great deal of to learn the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation, was still quite low.

As a Profound realm expert, Li Jing easily spotted his problem and thus gifted him four Soul Restoring Pills.

“Don’t overconsume your psychic power again.” Li Jing slightly frowned as if she even saw through the fact that he had overused his psychic power to study the Fragmentary Star Incantation. “Your current priority is to study the Demon Driving Incantation. Only when you master it will you truly master controlling the Bone Blood Demon and be able to display its full strength.

“I’ll answer your questions regarding the Demon Driving Incantation while Yu Tong will see to it that you have whatever else you need.”

With these words, Li Jing turned around and left the square.

Looking blankly at her elegant figure disappearing into the distance, complicated emotions rose in Nie Tian’s heart.

He could still remember that during the Treasure Convention at the Spiritual Treasure sect, the moon had been painted to the color of blood while Li Jing had sat on a floating, scarlet lotus, commanding a gigantic blood monster to tear open the Heaven Burning Earth Flame Formation and slaughter countless disciples of the Spiritual Treasure sect.

He had been chased after by powerful experts from the Blood sect and barely escaped.

Never had he ever imagined that one day this fierce woman would sit down with him and pass on the Blood sect’s secret magics to him.

Li Jing arrived at the area where all the Blood sect disciples were gathered. Her gaze swept through the crowd before it landed on Yu Tong as she said with a plain tone, “You’ll be responsible for delivering food to Nie Tian’s room over the next two days. Grant him whatever he needs. If he asks for anything you can’t get, come and find me.”

Yu Tong answered respectfully, “As you wish, sectmaster.”

“Good.” Li Jing slightly nodded.

Nie Tian spent the following day cultivating in his room.

First of all, he replenished his psychic power with the four Soul Restoring Pills and directed the extra power to the seven fragmentary stars in his soul.

Then, he focused on contemplating the profundity of the Demon Driving Incantation.

It was a secret magic that could allow people to communicate with Blood Demons. There were two ways to accomplish that: one, to establish a connection with blood, or two, to communicate with it via the resonance of their souls.

According to Li Jing, since low-rank Blood Demons didn't even possess a soul, the spell-caster would have to establish connection with it using blood.

However, high-rank Blood Demons like the Bone Blood Demon usually would possess an incomplete soul, so the spell-caster could communicate with it through the resonance of their blood or souls.

During their attempts to refine the Bone Blood Demon, Shen Xiu had once forcibly infused her own blood into it.

She had even sealed the Bone Blood Demon's incomplete soul in the Blood Spirit Pearl, nurturing it with her own blood day and night.

If the Bone Blood Demon had been awakened during that time, it would have taken Shen Xiu as its master.

Then, Shen Xiu would have been able to communicate with it and control it via the connection between her blood and the blood she had infused it with, or by resonating with its soul that she had sealed away in the Blood Spirit Pearl.

However, due to Yu Tong's low cultivation base, when the Bone Blood Demon had been awakened, she had failed to suppress the rebellion of its incomplete soul, which eventually broke free from the constraint of the Blood Spirit Pearl and flew back into its mind.

Therefore, that was when Shen Xiu had lost her last chance at gaining control of the Bone Blood Demon.

Li Jing had advised Nie Tian to try and awaken the Bone Blood Demon via the resonation of their souls, since this method was more advanced.

However, Nie Tian had more confidence in the other method. After all, he had successfully awakened the Bone Blood Demon before by dripping his blood onto its heart.

Hence, he planned to try out both methods.

But in order to ensure that he had grasped the essence of both methods before using them on the Bone Blood Demon, he intended to practice with a few low-rank Blood Demons first and see the results.

In the middle of the night, Nie Tian, who was quite confident in his understandings of the Demon Driving Incantation, grew excited and restless.

Just as he was about to rise to his feet and move out, Yu Tong walked into his room, holding a sizable silver platter.

As she approached, Nie Tian saw on the platter were many fresh fruits that exuded spiritual energy and greasy, grilled spirit beast meat.

“Here’s your food for the day.” She sat the big platter on the ground next to Nie Tian and rapidly turned around, as if she didn’t want to spend one more second in the room.

“Wait a moment,” Nie Tian said in a low voice.

“What else do you want?” Yu Tong turned back and said.

“I need eight more plates of food like this,” Nie Tian calmly answered. “I eat more than normal people.”

“Fine.” Yu Tong turned around and stepped towards the door.

As she walked away, she muttered to herself with a disdainful expression on her face, “Hope your stomach bursts and kills you!”

Moments later, she came back to Nie Tian’s room holding two giant platters that were filled with all sorts of food. As she approached him, she found that Nie Tian had already emptied the first platter.

Yu Tong was astounded for a moment before she put the food down and walked out.

A while later, when she returned with three more giant platters filled with food, she stared at Nie Tian the whole time as if she didn’t believe that Nie Tian had actually eaten all the food by himself.

She thought he was playing tricks on her after learning that he was so important to the realm of the Flame Heaven.

She didn’t believe that someone could actually gulp down so much food that quickly.

However, the moment she walked into the room, she saw Nie Tian doing what could only be referred to as inhaling his food.

Knowing that she wouldn't be able to finish even one platter in a whole day, she watched Nie Tian wolf down his food as if she was watching a monster devour its prey.

Now she was certain that it was no trick.

Only a moment later did she snap out of her daze and go to fetch the rest of the food Nie Tian had demanded.

A while later, Nie Tian finished all the food under Yu Tong's gaze. He burped and said drowsily, "Now get me a Blood Demon. I want to try out the Demon Driving Incantation."

With a frown, Yu Tong blurted, "Are you kidding? You've barely learned it!"

"I can't guarantee that I'll succeed. But it won't hurt to try, will it?" said Nie Tian.

"Most of our low-rank Blood Demons died fighting outsiders, and the outsiders ate their bodies." Yu Tong explained. "All that survived are high-rank ones that have their own masters. You won't be able to manipulate them. You can only conduct your experiments on the Bone Blood Demon... which should have been my master's."

Undisguised indignation could be seen in her eyes as she spoke.

She still couldn't let go of the idea that Nie Tian had stolen the

most powerful weapon from her sect by awakening the Bone Blood Demon and bringing it under his control.

“Only the Bone Blood Demon?”

After a moment of hesitation, Nie Tian waved his hand, telling her that her service was no longer needed.

Yu Tong left while killing intent could be seen in her eyes.

After she left, Nie Tian rose to his feet. With a deep frown, he walked to the place where the Bone Blood Demon had collapsed.

Facing one of its giant feet, he reached out his hand and pressed one finger on it. He wanted to see if he could establish a connection with it via the power in their blood.



# Chapter 213: Awakening of the Bloodline!

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“What?!” The moment the tip of Nie Tian’s finger made contact with the Bone Blood Demon’s foot bone, his eyebrows furrowed.

At that moment, he suddenly had a strong feeling that, as his internal organs worked, the spirit beast meat that he had consumed earlier was now rapidly unleashing wisps of flesh power into every corner of his body.

Normally, he would have this kind of feeling every time he consumed a large amount of spirit beast meat.

However, it felt different this time.

Instead of proceeding to cast the Demon Driving Incantation and trying to establish a connection with the Bone Blood Demon, he retracted his hand and then carefully examined himself with his psychic awareness.

He saw countless wisps of energy swimming out of his stomach towards every part of his body. However, as his heart beat more and more vigorously, all the energy wisps began converging on it.

Before, the essence he had absorbed from spirit beast meat would always have infused into his viscera and every piece of his muscle and flesh to gradually strengthen his body.

And that was the why his fleshy body had always been stronger

and tougher than other human Qi warriors his age.

However, it was different this time. The energy that had originated from his internal organs didn't flow to his muscles or bones, but rather his heart.

Standing next to the Bone Blood Demon's giant foot, he focused all his attention on finding what had triggered the change.

A wisp of his soul quietly flew into his heart and observed in silence.

He saw numerous wisps of energy flowing in through the walls of his heart from all directions, but what surprised him was that there was a green thread of energy coiled up at the bottom of his heart.

He had no idea when it had been formed and why it was there. He had never noticed it before.

The wisp of his soul floated closer to the coiled green energy, observing and sensing it very carefully.

He sensed the aura of an ancient life within the coiled thread of energy. It could be the concentrated form of life power or the source of a bloodline.

He came to another surprising finding as he furthered his examination.

Within the coiled, green thread of energy lay countless translucent and sparkling blood strings that were as fine as hairs. They interwove with each other and seemed to be brimming with green-colored energy.

If the green thread of energy were a living creature, those sparkling blood strings would be its meridians.

As the wisp of his soul delved even deeper, he discovered that tiny green dots were floating within the crystal-like blood strings.

Each and every one of them shone with bright, green light, as if they were some mysterious symbols that carried the profound truths of blood.

“Bloodline!” Nie Tian’s expression flickered. Then he found that all the wisps of energy that had been attracted by his heart were madly converging and disappearing into the green thread of energy.

The red wisps of energy were flesh power from the spirit beast meat.

However, the moment they entered his heart, the realm of the green energy thread, they seemed to be devoured and ground down into shreds by it.

It wasn’t long before every last wisp of flesh power disappeared

into the mysterious green energy thread.

However, it seemed still famished as it started swimming about within his heart like a greedy, mysterious python, foraging for more flesh power.

When it realized that it couldn't find any new prey, it finally settled down and coiled up again.

It was at that very moment that an intense dizziness struck Nie Tian.

Under the gaze of his soul, the green energy thread suddenly began to shine with dazzlingly green light.

At the same time, the green spots in the sparkling blood strings rapidly shifted into a new alignment.

“Bloodline. Talent. Life Transfer!”

A series of obscure words suddenly appeared in Nie Tian's mind. They were so clear and unforgettable that it was as if they were branded deeply on his soul.

All of a sudden, his heart started pounding rapidly and the wisp of his soul consciousness was instantly expelled!

Right before his soul consciousness was pushed out of his heart,

he saw his heart fill with dazzling green light.

However, it was just a second before the green thread of energy stopped shining and coiled up at the bottom of his heart again, silent and calm.

Even still, the words that had been engraved in his mind just now became increasingly clear and meaningful.

“The life of the bloodline is awakened and I’ve been given another talent, Life Transfer!” Nie Tian seemed to have an epiphany.

Hua Mu had once told him that he was different, and after the Heaven Gate trial, he was increasingly certain that he had a unique bloodline power within his blood.

Perhaps, the reason why it hadn’t showed any signs of life before was that his cultivation base was far too low.

Therefore, due to the recent, rapid advancement in his cultivation base, the power that had been hidden within his bloodline was finally awakened, and Life Transfer was the first talent he obtained after the awakening.

He was still standing next to the Bone Blood Demon’s foot, eyes closed and still, contemplating the first bloodline talent he had obtained.

He had a feeling that the successful awakening of his bloodline talent had a great deal to do with him awakening the Bone Blood Demon.

The act of him dripping his own blood onto the Bone Blood Demon's heart to awaken it might have been a manifestation of Life Transfer.

The awakening of this particular bloodline talent almost seemed too timely to be true, as if his body knew what he needed the most at this moment and intentionally developed in this direction.

Eyes closed, he tried with all his heart to master the profound truths of the newly-acquired bloodline talent.

He had long since forgotten that he was there to use the Demon Driving Incantation to communicate with the Bone Blood Demon.

Off to the side, Yu Tong was standing about ten meters away from him, observing him from a blind corner.

She had seen Nie Tian touch the Bone Blood Demon with his finger and then rapidly retract his hand.

Then, she had detected abnormally strong energy fluctuations from within his body.

Even though she had sensed some anomalies, she hadn't been able to detect the radical change in Nie Tian's heart, no matter

how hard she had tried.

As a matter of fact, no one had been able to, not even sectmaster Li Jing.

A very long time passed by...

Nie Tian slowly opened his eyes as he finished mastering the main parts of his first bloodline talent.

With a deep breath, he leaped onto the collapsed Bone Blood Demon's chest.

He crouched down and pressed one hand on its giant, grayish-brown heart, in an attempt to start the Life Transfer.

The moment he focused on the thought, the thread of green aura in his heart suddenly began to emanate bright light again.

The countless crystal-like blood strings within it and the green spots flowing within those strings blossomed with dazzling light.

All of a sudden, an extremely fine strand of green aura was separated from the green aura in his heart and flew out.

No sparkling blood strings or green shiny spots could be seen within it.

It seemed that it was made of pure life power, with no bloodline power or mysterious symbols inside of it.

The fine strand of green aura rapidly flew out of his heart and followed his meridians toward his hand that was pressed against the Bone Blood Demon's heart.

During the process, Nie Tian could keenly sense the blood in his veins growing increasingly restless to the point where he felt as if his blood was seething.

Then he found that wisps of aura that seemed to contain pure life power began to seep out of his blood and quickly swim towards the strand of green aura.

After they merged with the green aura, it rapidly expanded.

However, as more and more wisps of aura disappeared into the green aura, Nie Tian was gradually seized by an intense weariness.

A moment later, the strand of green aura that was significantly larger than before flew out of the palm of Nie Tian's hand and entered the Bone Blood Demon's heart.

Almost at the same time, its slumbering heart began to pound vigorously once again.

It was also at that moment, Nie Tian felt a mysterious connection between his blood and the Bone Blood Demon's.



BOOM!

With a loud sound, the Bone Blood Demon suddenly rose to its feet, causing Nie Tian to fall heavily to the ground.

“Ten days! It will last ten days this time!” Even though Nie Tian experienced dizziness from the loss of life power and the fall, he was very certain that the Bone Blood Demon would remain active for ten days by relying on the life power within the strand of green aura.

Furthermore, he felt that there was now a more profound connection between himself and the Bone Blood Demon.

From what he could tell, merely a thought in his mind would be able to command the Bone Blood Demon to kill his enemies for him.

He would no longer need to manifest a strong killing intent and lock onto his enemies with his psychic awareness to achieve that.

As soon as the thought of it appeared in his mind, the Bone Blood Demon would immediately read his intentions and carry them out.

However, it suddenly occurred to him that he didn't even get to use the Demon Driving Incantation yet. The method he had just applied was completely different and far more profound.

“What?!” Li Jing sensed the rise of the Bone Blood Demon and arrived within seconds. A confused expression filled her face as she asked Nie Tian, “You’ve mastered the Demon Driving Incantation in such little time!? And also, didn’t I tell you to wait to awaken the Bone Blood Demon until we’re in the Ghost sect?”

Many powerful experts of the Blood sect also rushed to the scene and every one of them had shock written across their face. “How can that be possible?! It’s only been a day. How in the world did he master the Demon Driving Incantation so quickly?”

Yu Tong was also dumbstruck. She looked at Nie Tian in the same way she looked at a high-tier outsider for the first time.

“Umm, I think I may really be capable of practicing Blood sect incantations.” Nie Tian said embarrassedly, knowing that the method he had just used to awaken the Bone Blood Demon had absolutely nothing to do with the Demon Driving Incantation that Li Jing had imparted to him.

Anyhow, he achieved the result he was looking for.

## Chapter 214: Green Aura

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“How long will it remain active this time, Nie Tian?” Brow furrowed, Li Jing asked with certain grimness in her voice.

“A few days,” Nie Tian answered.

“Are you sure you are in total control of it?” Li Jing reconfirmed with Nie Tian.

Nie Tian nodded in reply.

“Everyone, there’s a change of plan.” Li Jing said decisively, “We’ll march out to the Ghost sect today. Now that the Bone Blood Demon is awakened, we need to make the most out of it. We need to use it to kill as many outsiders as we can and as fast as we can.”

As she gently raised her jade-like arm, more than twenty Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors from the Blood sect, as well as Hong Can and Zou Yi, gathered by her side, as if they had been waiting for this moment for a long time.

“Unfortunately, the outsiders killed every last one of my spirit beast mounts.” After a moment of hesitation, she said, “I won’t be able to get you all to the Ghost sect by myself. According to my estimation, you will need at least two days to get there, and that’s assuming you don’t run into any outsiders on your way there.”

At that moment Nie Tian, who was still yet to recover from the

dizziness, realized, to his surprise, that Li Jing planned to set off at that very moment.

The Bone Blood Demon that was more than thirty meters tall seemed to have seen through Nie Tian's concerns and suddenly crouched down next to Nie Tian.

Even crouched, the Bone Blood Demon was still more than ten meters tall, so it wouldn't be easy for Nie Tian to jump onto its shoulder.

As soon as that concern was born in Nie Tian's heart, the Bone Blood Demon lay prone on the ground so that he could easily mount its shoulder.

SHEW!

With a swift leap, Nie Tian mounted the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder and got ready to move out to the Ghost sect under Li Jing's leadership.

In this way, he wouldn't need to spend any of his own energy to get there.

"Hmm?" Li Jing noticed the actions of Nie Tian and the Bone Blood Demon.

"Nie Tian!" she called out to him. "The Bone Blood Demon is strong enough to carry more people. Since you're in control of it,

tell it to carry the others on its back so that we can get to the Ghost sect as soon as possible.”

The expression of every Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior flickered; anticipation could be seen in their eyes.

“Let me see if I can.” The moment the thought of it entered Nie Tian’s mind, the Bone Blood Demon, who was rising from the ground, once again lay prone. Then, Nie Tian beckoned for Hong Can and Zou Yi to come over.

Under Li Jing’s gaze, the two of them stepped cautiously towards the Bone Blood Demon.

As they approached, a fluctuating aura suddenly spread out into the surroundings from within the Bone Blood Demon’s body, within which Nie Tian detected enmity.

“Calm down,” Nie Tian said in his mind.

In the next moment, the Bone Blood Demon’s fierce aura became peaceful again.

“Over here.” Standing on the Bone Bone Blood Demon’s broad shoulder, Nie Tian beckoned for Hong Can and Zou Yi to come to his side.

The two were slightly frightened by the sudden energy fluctuations, but stepped forward with caution and jumped onto

the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder.

The Bone Blood Demon seemed fine with it.

“Go, all of you,” Li Jing issued the command.

After seeing that nothing had happened to Hong Can and Zou Yi, the Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors from the Blood sect jumped to Nie Tian's side one after another.

After everyone got a firm foothold, Li Jing nodded and said, “Let's move out.”

After those words, the blood-colored lotus whizzed out of her ring of holding and, with a swift move, she sat on top of it and floated up into the air.

“Keep up with her,” Nie Tian issued the command with his mind.

All of a sudden, an incomparably strong aura burst forth from within every vein in the Bone Blood Demon's bony body, and it rose up into the sky, as if it was no longer bound by gravity.

Hong Can's expression flickered as he shifted his gaze between the Bone Blood Demon under him and Nie Tian to his side. Utterly amazed, he said, “The Blood Demon created from a level eight Bone Giant is truly a marvelous weapon! It's your great fortune that Li Jing took you in as her disciple and made you master of this Bone Blood Demon.”

Flying beside them on her lotus, Li Jing said ironically, “No, the pleasure is mine.”

At the same time, a dark-red medicinal pill flew out of Li Jing’s lotus and towards Nie Tian.

“You must have consumed a lot of essence of Qi and blood to awaken the Bone Blood Demon.” Li Jing said lightly. “Here’s a Blood Pill, refined from the blood of fourth grade spirit beasts. One third of it should be enough to restore all the Qi and blood essence you’ve expended.”

The blood-colored lotus soared side by side with the Bone Blood Demon in the dawn sky, hundreds of meters above the ground.

The Blood Pill that Li Jing had gifted Nie Tian somehow remained within a reachable distance as it floated in front of him.

As soon as Nie Tian reached out to grab the pill, he sensed the wisp of spiritual energy that had been wreathing the pill rapidly returning to its master, Li Jing.

“One third will be enough?” He muttered to himself.

Hong Can from the Hell sect reassured Nie Tian in a low voice, “Blood Pills refined from the blood of fourth grade spirit beasts contain extremely rich Qi and blood essence. I know that you’re quite special, but I’m certain that one third will be more than

enough to recover all the energy you've lost. Senior Li treats you well. These pills are rather hard to get in the Realm of Flame Heaven. Don't force yourself with it."

He knew that Nie Tian had become a key factor to the situation of the whole realm, and thus didn't want anything to happen to him before they even arrived at the Ghost sect.

Nie Tian understood his good intentions.

Therefore, since he also couldn't be sure of the medicinal efficacy of the pill, he pinched one third of the pill and threw it into his mouth.

The moment it entered his stomach, it started to unleash an amazingly large amount of energy.

Nie Tian used his soul to examine himself and found numerous wisps of energy rapidly spreading out from his stomach to every corner of his body, filling every drop of his blood.

It wasn't long before he felt enlivened and filled with thriving life force.

As energetic as he felt, he could tell that he hadn't reached his peak state.

Knowing that the medicinal efficacy of one third of the Blood Pill wasn't enough, he opened his eyes and glanced around,



discovering that Li Jing was sitting on her red lotus, looking forward.

The other Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors were either cultivating with their eyes closed, talking to one another, or observing the situation on the ground.

No one was paying any attention to him.

With a frown, he quickly shoved another third of the Blood Pill into his mouth.

Immediately after that, another surge of extremely rich energy filled his abdomen before it gradually dispersed into every part of his body.

It wasn't long before his Qi and blood essence were restored to the fullest, and even with a large amount to spare.

Just as the extra Qi and blood essence couldn't find a place to go, Nie Tian's heart beat abnormally strong for a moment.

In the next moment, the wisps of energy that had been swimming aimlessly in his flesh and blood seemed to have found their destination: his heart.

Without the slightest hesitation, he sent a wisp of his soul to examine his heart, and found countless fine wisps of energy madly pouring into his heart.

Upon such scene, the originally calm thread of green aura immediately grew ecstatic. It rapidly swooped toward one wisps of energy after another.

Only several minutes later, all the energy wisps were ripped apart and devoured by the thread of green aura.

However, the restless green aura was still slithering up and down in Nie Tian's heart, as if it was looking for more.

After a moment of hesitation, Nie Tian secretly shoved the last third of the Blood Pill into his mouth, wanting to see if that could satisfy that mysterious green aura.

# Chapter 215: Tragedy

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It wasn't long before all the essence of blood and Qi was absorbed by the thread of green aura residing in Nie Tian's heart.

However, the green aura didn't grow a bit afterwards, and no change could be seen.

The fact that he had awakened his first bloodline talent, Life Transfer, merely by consuming spirit beast meat made him anticipate that after consuming a whole Blood Pill, which contained far richer essence of flesh and blood, it would cause the green aura to change in some way, or even awaken a second bloodline talent.

Staring at the silent green aura, he was somewhat disappointed, thinking that he might need to reconsider the profundity of bloodline power.

He gradually calmed himself and started contemplating.

Then he realized that the thread of green aura must have been there for some time, and it might even existed before he had participated in the Heaven Gate trial. It was the significant amount of spirit beast meat that he had consumed throughout these months that had provided him with enough power to awaken that first bloodline talent.

He had just happened to have that meal of spirit beast meat when he had built up to the verge of breaking through, and that was why

he was under the impression that a meal of spirit beat meat had made the difference.

Therefore, in order for the green aura to upgrade again, he would need to feed it with far more essence of flesh and blood.

A single Blood Pill was far from enough to achieve that.

“Bloodline...” Nie Tian marveled at the profundity of the mysterious power that resided his heart and ran through his veins.

He was also prepared to spend a long time to awaken his second bloodline talent.

It was at that moment that Zou Yi from the Ghost Sect called out, pointing down, “Look! Down on the ground!”

Nie Tian opened his eyes and looked down through the gaps between the Bone Blood Demon’s huge bones, and found that they were flying over a vast expanse of dark red wasteland.

On the wasteland, a group of human commoners were fleeing.

Chasing after them were two giant low-tier outsiders, one of which was even munching on a tender, pale arm that apparently belonged to a human girl.

With a grim look in his eyes, Zou Yi said, “Nie Tian, can you

control the Bone Blood Demon to fly closer to the ground?”

“Sure.” The thought of it appeared in Nie Tian’s mind.

In the next moment, the Bone Blood Demon dashed down from midair at a high speed, and when it was less than a hundred meters from the ground, Zou Yi jumped off of the Bone Blood Demon.

As he gracefully descended, numerous pitch-black banners whizzed out of his bracelet of holding. As soon as they appeared, they unfurled against the wind, and the sinister ghosts on them could be seen.

All of a sudden, a strong cold aura that originated from Zou Yi’s mind and the vicious ghosts on his banners rushed toward the two low-tier outsiders.

Since they didn’t know how to use the power of their soul to defend themselves, upon the impact of Zou Yi’s psychic attack, they could only run away, holding their heads and screaming.

At that moment, the banners swooped down from midair, and the banner poles, which were as sharp as blades, pierced deeply into the low-tier outsiders’ gigantic bodies. They dropped dead in the next moment.

Upon seeing that Zou Yi had killed the two low-tier outsiders that had been chasing after them, all the fleeing commoners stopped and gathered around him, their faces filled with excitement and

hope. “It’s Lord Zou Yi from the Ghost Sect!”

“Lord Zou Yi, You’ve come back from the Heaven Gate!”

Apparently, Zou Yi knew them. He asked, “How’s Northland City holding up?”

“The outsiders have killed most the citizens who stayed and fought.” One of them answered. “Only a handful were lucky enough to make it out alive.”

A pained expression appeared on Zou Yi’s face as he nodded to that person and said, “You should go to the Blood Sect. You’ll be safer there.”

With these words, Zou Yi leaped swiftly back onto the shoulder of the Bone Blood Demon, which had remained in the air for him.

“Aihh...” Hong Can from the Hell Sect let out a deep sigh as he shook his head.

Nie Tian’s expression also turned grim.

Li Jing, who was still sitting on her blood-colored lotus, had floated in her original position as the Bone Blood Demon descended.

Only after seeing that Zou Yi had returned to the shoulder of the

Bone Blood Demon did she drive her lotus and head out toward the Ghost Sect again.

After flying over the dark-red wasteland for an hour, sitting on the Bone Blood Demon, Nie Tian saw a city that greatly resembled Black Cloud City.

“Northland City,” Zou Yi said, gnashing his teeth.

Nie Tian rose to his feet and looked down at the city from the shoulder of the Bone Blood Demon, his face growing increasingly grim.

What he saw was an empty city and a few low-tier outsiders roaming about inside of it. None of the human citizens or members of the Ghost Sect’s subordinate clans were anywhere to be found.

After searching for a while, he couldn’t even see one human survivor.

Apparently, this city, which was the size of Black Cloud City, had been raided by the low-tier outsiders and fallen.

Even though he was looking at Northland City, Nie Tian was actually picturing Black Cloud City in his mind.

Just like Northland City, Black Cloud City was also the residence of commoners and clans that clung to the seven sects.

In a city like this, there would usually be no more than two Greater Heaven stage cultivators and a handful of Heaven stage cultivators protect the city. When an army of low-tier outsiders came at their city gate, it would be almost impossible for them to save the city on their own.

Northland City was now in ruins. What would Black Cloud City be like?

Nie Tian couldn't help but grow worried. He was afraid that even if Shen Xiu, Li Fan and the others had arrived at Black Cloud City, it might have already been too late.

His grandfather and aunt might have already fallen victim to those hideous low-tier outsiders.

“You'll pay for this, outsider demons!” The lifeless Northland City had made Nie Tian realize how brutal this war between humans and outsiders was.

If the Realm of Flame Heaven was ever taken by the outsiders, perhaps some powerful experts from the seven sects might survive, but how many members of their subordinate clans and common citizens would survive?

“Let's go. Northland City is a lost cause. I can't sense any signs of life.” Sitting on her blood-colored lotus, Li Jing let out a soft sigh and drove her lotus forwards. “The decisive battle will be the one at the Ghost Sect. If we want to save the day, we'll have to beat the



main force of the outsider army at the Ghost Sect. Only by doing that will we be able to prevent further casualties.”

Zou Yi retracted his gaze from Northland City underneath them and began to thrum with an increasingly strong killing intent.

“Outsiders!!” Zou Yi bellowed in his heart.

With a thought, Nie Tian commanded the Bone Blood Demon to catch up to Li Jing as they flew towards the Ghost Sect.

On their way there, they saw two other cities that were similar to Northland City.

They were closer to the Ghost Sect, and they had more low-tier outsiders roaming inside of them. As they had expected, not a single survivor was seen.

The thought of the countless human lives that the outsider invaders had taken gradually numbed Nie Tian emotions.

It became clear to him that the conflict between humans and outsiders had become irreconcilable; either they would either wipe out the invading outsiders, or every human in the Realm of Flame Heaven would be annihilated.

“Mortals and cultivators with low cultivation bases can never protect themselves from a calamity like this,” Nie Tian muttered to himself. “Should we fail, they’ll inevitably fall prey to the

outsiders.”

After seeing the three cities filled with countless mangled bodies of his own kind, Nie Tian had become more and more determined.

He knew that he needed to be stronger than the outsiders not only for himself and his family, but for every survivor in the Realm of Flame Heaven.

Only when he was strong enough would he become the master of his own fate and the fate of all those who counted on him.

He no longer paid any attention to the human corpses that he could see from time to time.

Instead, he calmed himself, and then began cultivating with spirit stones, hoping to improve his strength with every second he could find.

After all, he knew very well that they currently needed all the help they could get.

After an unknown period of time, Li Jing’s voice echoed out, “We’re almost there.”

Everyone on the Bone Blood Demon, including Nie Tian, immediately focused their sight on the distant horizon.

At first glance, Nie Tian's expression flickered. In front of his eyes was an enormous cloud of demon Qi, inside of which figures of numerous outsiders constantly flashed about.

# Chapter 216: The Ghost Sect

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Nie Tian saw in front of him a five-kilometer-wide area covered in demon Qi so dense that it seemed like an enormous, blackish-purple vortex, enveloping the entire Ghost Sect.

Upon closer examination, the vortex looked very much like the vortexes in Nie Tian's spiritual sea.

The only difference was that it was filled with raging demon Qi, the power source for outsider demons.

The vortex of demon Qi slowly rotated as hundreds of figures of outsiders flashed about within it.

There were about a dozen bright, purple clusters with the vortex, which shone so brightly that even the dense demon Qi couldn't conceal them.

Nie Tian looked with rapt attention, and found that each of them had a well-dressed high-tier outsider in the center.

Each of those high-tier outsiders seemed to be no weaker than Worldly realm human Qi warriors. They all rippled with vigorous energy fluctuations which seemed to be powering the vortex of demon Qi, enabling it to gnaw away the Ghost sect's Wail of Myriad Ghosts grand formation.

For every bit the demon Qi vortex rotated, it pulled more demon

Qi in the vicinity toward it.

However, Nie Tian couldn't see what was going on within the Ghost Sect, and neither could he sense anything with his psychic awareness from a position so far away.

“Stop!”

Looking at the raging demon Qi from afar, Li Jing stopped her blood-colored lotus.

Immediately afterwards, Nie Tian conveyed the same notion to the Bone Blood Demon. In the next moment, the Bone Blood Demon also came to a stop, and floated in midair with everyone on its shoulders.

Just as Nie Tian looked over at Li Jing with a confused face, wondering what her plan was, he sensed a wave of powerful energy fluctuations rush out of Li Jing's spiritual sea towards the demon Qi-covered area like an immense wave of a blood ocean.

He instantly understood that Li Jing was using her own methods to gather information on the situation at the area where the main force of the outsider army was gathered.

At the same time...

Nie Tian saw that in the center of the demon Qi vortex was a magnificent city, which seemed ancient and built by countless

huge, green rocks.

The city was approximately the same size as Northland City, but there were sinister ghosts engraved on every gate to the city.

Numerous green veins and patterns could be seen on the walls of the city, within which vicious ghosts were twisting and struggling.

The way it looked felt as if the ancient city had been wreathed by countless ferocious ghosts.

The entire city was enveloped by a semi-sphere of misty green light, within which numerous ghosts were whizzing about, shrieking so loudly that the sound could pierce any intruders' eardrums.

At the center of the green stone city was an enormous bottomless pit, and bone-piercing coldness constantly flowed out of it.

Upon closer examination, it was actually countless ghosts that had been flying out of the abyss. Like an endless swarm of locusts, they rapidly disappeared into the green walls of the ancient stone city.

It seemed that the ghosts were fueling the Wail of Myriad Ghosts spell formation with an endless stream of mysterious power from the netherworld.

A handful of powerful experts from the Ghost Sect were sitting

by the edge of the huge pit, eyes closed, faces ghastly.

They were constantly changing their hand seals while a banner fluttered against the wind beside them. It seemed that they were the ones who were summoning the endless stream of ghosts from the depths of the earth with the banner's help.

However, it was obvious that they were rapidly consuming their own strength as they performed the ritual.

There were a few others standing behind them. Whenever one of the spell-casters could no longer go on, another expert from the Ghost Sect would step in and take his place.

Those who were replaced would silently step away from the spell formation and use all kinds of medicinal pills to recover their strength, so as to step in whenever someone else was drained of power.

Off to the side, a skinny old man from the Ghost Sect was talking to Chang Sen from the Hell Sect.

The elder that resembled a bag of bones was none other than the sectmaster of the Ghost Sect, Ghost Eye.

The name of Ghost Eye was so widespread that no one even remembered his real name. He had adopted this name since he had joined the Ghost Sect, and had never changed it, not even after he had been made sectmaster.

His eyes were emerald and profound, as if there were two oceans hiding behind his pupils, within which tens of thousands of ghosts were trapped and wailing.

Any human Qi warrior whose cultivation base was lower than his would immediately experience a disturbance in their minds as long as they dared to peer into his eyes.

If he wanted to, he could even effortlessly rip the souls out of the minds of those who had inferior cultivation bases.

Obviously, Chang Sen wouldn't need to worry about that, since he was the most powerful Qi warrior in the Realm of Flame Heaven.

"Ghost Eye, how long do you think the spell formation will hold?" Chang Sen asked with a frown.

"Two days." As soon as Ghost Eye spoke, strong energy fluctuations spread out along with his voice, seemingly capable of changing the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth and turning the area around him into the gruesome netherworld. "As you can see, those elders won't be able to hold on for much longer. If the Wail of Myriad Ghosts formation is breached, they won't have much energy left in them. If it comes to that, we'll need to count on your people to fight the outsiders."

Chang Sen nodded and said, "I see. The reason I chose the Ghost Sect to be the place to fight the most decisive battle against the



outsiders was that you could summon ghosts from the netherworld to power the Wail of Myriad Ghosts formation. But unfortunately, powerful experts need to expend a significant amount of energy to perform the summoning ritual. If our Demon Trapping Purgatory formation could still work, I would be able to use it to draw power from the trapped outsider demons, and use that power to activate an impenetrable defensive system.”

“What do you think of the odds that we prevail?” Ghost Eye asked, eyes glittering with profound light.

Chang Sen pondered in silence for a while before saying, “Thirty percent chance, at the most.”

Upon hearing Chang Sen’s answer, Ghost Eye also fell into silence. After a long while, he said, “Do you know what the situation is at the other sects?”

“Probably worse than us.” With a grim expression on his face, Chang Sen said, “The Grayvale Sect has already fallen. Li Jing might be able to hold on for a bit longer, but it’s only a matter of time before the Blood Sect falls. The Mystic Mist Sect can be ignored. We can’t possibly count on them to change the situation. We can only hope that Wu Ji will beat their opponents in the Cloudsoaring Sect.”

With these words, Chang Sen shook his head and sighed, “But Eccentric Wu’s lifespan is running out. If he goes all-out to fend off the outsiders, even if he succeeds, he won’t be able to persist for long. This was also why I didn’t have the heart to make a move on him when you and Li Jing went to the Scarlet Flame Mountain

Range.”

“My choice accidentally gave the Realm of Flame Heaven a slightly better chance of surviving. Otherwise, the tie might have already been broken.”

Ghost Eye let out a cold harrumph. “If we can somehow live through this calamity, I’ll definitely take revenge against the other realms, especially that person from the Realm of Earth Sieve!”

Chang Sen shook his head and said, “It’s hard to say if we will be able pull through.”

“What!” Ghost Eye’s expression suddenly flickered. A strange expression appeared on his ghastly face as he called out, “Li Jing is here!”

Chang Sen was also astonished. “Can it be that she has already finished off all the outsiders at her sect?”

Chang Sen had always known that Ghost Eye had been close to Li Jing. The two of them usually got together to discuss cultivation methods. They even had a unique way to communicate with each other which even he couldn’t fathom.

Ghost Eye narrowed his eyes, and countless ghosts began to flash across in his pupils, as if every one of them carried symbols that only he knew how to interpret.

“Yes, she did,” Ghost Eye said in high spirits. “And she’s not alone. That Bone Giant also came with her!”

“What?” Shock could be heard from Chang Sen’s voice. “Did she manage to turn that eighth level Bone Giant into a Blood Demon? With the Bone Blood Demon and Li Jing here to help us, our odds will improve by at least twenty percent. Then we won’t have to stay behind the grand formation and defend. We may consider meeting them in battle!”

“Exactly! It’s time to stretch my legs!” A horrifying smile appeared on Ghost Eye’s face.

## Chapter 217: Joining Forces

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“Now that we’re here, the real battle shall begin.”

After retracting the soul consciousness that she had sent out to Ghost Eye, Li Jing turned to look at Nie Tian, Hong Can, and the others as she said, “Nie Tian, you remain on the Bone Blood Demon’s shoulder and don’t go anywhere. You just need to command it to kill as many low-tier outsiders as possible. When you’ve killed enough of them, those high-tier outsiders will notice you and come to you.”

Then she turned to Hong Can and Zou Yi and said, “You cooperate with Nie Tian, but try not to fight high-tier outsiders in close quarters.”

With those words, she and the red lotus she sat on sailed through the air towards the center of the demon Qi-covered area like a blood-colored rainbow.

As she approached the vortex of demon Qi, numerous blood threads that were as thick as human arms suddenly extended out of her crystal-like lotus.

Like blood-colored lightning bolts, they whizzed down from mid-air and pierced into the chests of dozens of low-tier outsiders.

Those low-tier outsiders, who had been rampaging in the demon Qi, instantly let out miserable wails and stopped breathing.

Nie Tian was amazed by this scene.

This was the first time that he had seen Li Jing fight. When he had gone to the Blood Sect before, he had almost immediately engaged in fierce battle with Groete, and couldn't spare the attention to look at her.

Therefore, the lethality of Li Jing's attacks astonished him beyond words.

“Profound realm! Is this the power of a profound realm expert?”

Nie Tian's expression flickered as it suddenly occurred to him that the blood-colored lotus that Li Jing had been sitting on might also be a Spirit Channeling grade treasure.

While he was shaken by that thought, a gigantic blood shadow, the might of which he had witnessed twice already, flew out of the blood-colored lotus.

As soon as it flew out, even more scarlet blood threads came out of the red lotus along with it, which, upon a closer look, seemed like numerous blood chains, locking onto the blood shadow's gigantic body.

However, Nie Tian knew that those scarlet chains that seemed to have blood running within them were actually a part of the blood shadow.

BLUB BLUB!

The scarlet threads that had pierced and killed dozens of low-tier outsiders seemed to have turned into huge vessels, rapidly channeling purple outsider blood to the enormous blood shadow.

Only seconds later, those low-tier outsiders turned into nothing but bags of bones as they were drained of every last drop of their blood.

By the time the shriveled low-tier outsiders were thrown to the ground, the blood shadow, whose outline was rather obscure, had already expanded to five times its original size.

ROOOOAR!

The blood shadow threw its head back and let out a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering roar. In the next moment, an intense blood aura that was laced with a faint, purple mist rose from inside of it and filled its surroundings.

“What an awesome Spirit Channeling grade treasure!”

Hong Can from the Hell Sect couldn't help but marvel at its formidable power. “Its soul can even leave the entity and use the Blood Sect's Blood Refining Incantation to strengthen itself with the outsiders' blood. Li Jing has indeed gone all-out to fight this battle!”

“The soul of the Blood Lotus is a special kind of Blood Demon. Sectmaster Li Jing applied many secret magics in order to refine it, and our sect’s Ghost Refining Incantation was among them.” Zou Yi from the Ghost Sect said after taking a deep breath, “Even though the soul of the Blood Lotus seems illusionary, it’s actually every bit as real as you and I. Its body is made of condensed blood.”

“The Blood Lotus’s soul is a special kind of Blood Demon?” Nie Tian was taken aback.

Never had he thought that the enormous blood shadow was actually the Blood Lotus’s soul, and that the Ghost Sect’s Ghost Refining Incantation had played an important role in its refinement. Now he understood why it was so powerful.

“Li Jing! You’ve arrived just in time!”

At that moment, Ghost Eye’s eerie voice echoed out from the eye of the enormous demon Qi vortex.

Upon hearing his voice, Zou Yi’s expression immediately grew respectful as he said, “Sectmaster!”

All of a sudden, the small figure of a man shot out of the green stone city covered in raging demon Qi and charged towards the area where all the high-tier outsiders were gathered.

It was none other than Ghost Eye, the sectmaster of the Ghost

Sect.

The moment he appeared, two sinister ghosts floated out of his ocean-like, unfathomable pupils, which rapidly expanded to several dozen meters tall.

After those two ghosts flew out of his pupils, his pupils seemed to instantly shed their gruesomeness, and no more ghosts could be seen flashing across within them.

It was as if all the ferocious ghosts hiding deep within his pupils had morphed into two giant ghosts at that instant and shot out from his eyes.

“Two Heaven Ghosts!” Hong Can exclaimed.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

Right after that, nine pitch-black banners rushed out from Ghost Eye’s back. Each and every one of them was more than ten meters tall and five meters wide.

The ghosts within the banners screeched, struggled, and bore their fangs at each other, before they eventually emerged as nine green ghosts.

“Nine Earth Ghosts!” Zou Yi’s expression flickered as he said loudly, “Our sectmaster has used his full strength!”



Those two Heaven Ghosts and nine Earth Ghosts were Ghost Eye's most powerful and precious weapons. He had spent years breeding them.

The fact that he had sent them out all at once made it clear that he was holding nothing back!

Even though Nie Tian was observing from a position very far away from the Heaven Ghosts, he couldn't help but have a feeling that they could easily take his soul.

The moment Ghost Eye shot out of the ancient stone city, a high-tier outsider also dashed out towards him from the area where all the high-tier outsiders were gathered.

At the same time, another one let out a cold harrumph and flew towards Li Jing.

Soon after that, a grotesque outsider voice rang out from the center of the demon Qi vortex. It was a language Nie Tian couldn't understand, but as soon as he heard it, numerous low-tier outsiders swarmed out of the demon Qi vortex and charged toward Nie Tian and his companions.

That was when he realized that the high-tier outsiders had also noticed their arrival, and the real battle had just broken out.

“Nie Tian, tell the Bone Blood Demon to descend.”

Hong Can stretched his neck and rubbed his hands together so tightly that his knuckles made cracking sounds. Apparently, he had been waiting for this for a long time.

Without saying anything, Nie Tian immediately commanded the floating Bone Blood Demon to land.

Simultaneously, all of the Greater Heaven stage experts, who had been sitting on the Bone Blood Demon, drew their spiritual tools and began thrumming with misty spiritual auras, ready to dash out into the low-tier outsider army at any moment.

BOOM!

The Bone Blood Demon landed heavily on the ground. As everyone else jumped off and charged forward with angry roars, Nie Tian swiftly shifted his position from the back of its shoulder to over its left shoulder.

With a thought, Nie Tian issued a command: kill these ugly creatures, and kill them as fast as you can!

CRACK! CRACK!

As the Bone Blood Demon strode forward, with every step it took, its feet crashed deeply into the earth, as if it were running on a gigantic sponge.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

One after another, numerous lines of intense blood aura shot out from the gaps of its exposed bones before piercing through the incoming low-tier outsiders like blood-colored spears.

Those lines of blood aura greatly resembled the blood chains that had shot out of Li Jing's Blood Lotus, only they were from the Bone Blood Demon's body.

Immediately after they pierced into the outsiders, they rapidly expanded, as if they were leeches that were sucking away their victims' blood.

“Blood Refining Incantation!”

Flabbergasted, Nie Tian watched as the numerous lines of blood aura, which were now filled with purple outsider blood, flew back and disappeared into the Bone Blood Demon's bones.

Only days ago, the Bone Blood Demon would have had to rip the outsiders apart and shower itself with their blood to obtain more power.

However, it had either received inspiration from the Blood Lotus or made growth so significant that it actually learned how to send its bloody aura own out to fetch blood from outsiders. With this far more efficient method, it would definitely be able to enhance its battle prowess exponentially.

CRACKLE! CRACKLE!

After acquiring more strength, the Bone Blood Demon effortlessly cut through a swarm of low-tier outsiders like they were nothing but melons and cabbages.

Sitting atop its shoulder, Nie Tian saw that it had killed almost a hundred low-tier outsiders in a short period of time.

Apparently, they were no match for its formidable strength. None of them could even withstand a single strike.

The great blow that the Bone Blood Demon had dealt to the army of low-tier outsiders had exceeded the efforts of all the Greater Heaven stage cultivators combined.

On the other hand, a high-tier outsider seemed to have notice the unstoppable Bone Blood Demon, and gracefully rose out of the center of the demon Qi vortex like a beautiful, violet flower, before floating towards Nie Tian and the Bone Blood Demon.

“A little girl...”

Eyes narrowed, Nie Tian saw that it was a little girl covered in devilishly beautiful flowers. Looking at her delicate small face, for some unknown reason, Nie Tian couldn't help but feel a surge of coldness.

What had made him uneasy was that his instincts told him that there was a ferocious monster lurking under her tender skin.

# Chapter 218: Zelia

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The Bone Blood Demon stopped killing low-tier outsiders as its eyes that seemed to have no pupils within them became fixed on the little girl.

Its reaction greatly surprised Nie Tian, and his expression grew increasingly grim.

He was very well aware that the Bone Blood Demon had its own soul, and as incomplete as it was, it enabled the Bone Blood Demon to judge the strength of its opponents.

The fact that it started to act strangely the moment it saw the little girl coming towards it made Nie Tian realize that the little girl must have some secrets.

The closer the little girl got, the more nervous he felt.

Unlike all the other high-tier outsiders he had seen, she looked like a ten-year-old human girl. Her face was delicate and beautiful, and the skin on her face seemed so tender that even the slightest contact would scrape it.

Upon a closer look, numerous violet flowers could be seen covering her torso as if they were some kind of armor that had grown out of her body.

Every once in awhile, purple lightning would swim out of them

and across her body.

The little girl traveled in the air in a way that made it look as if gravity had no effect on her. As she approached Nie Tian, she looked Nie Tian in the eye and smiled as she said in perfectly clear human language, “A strong Blood Demon from the Blood sect... You came from the Blood Sect. Did you run into that fool Groete?”

Nie Tian was dumbstruck by her words and said, “Who are you?”

“My name is Zelia.” The little girl seemed very blunt. With a friendly expression on her face, she continued, “He’s my little brother. You’re here, and he and Sarah didn’t come after you. Does it mean that you killed them? Well, if you did, I’ll have to thank you for it.”

“Little brother?” Nie Tian was completely confused.

The high-tier outsider in front of him looked much younger than Groete. He would have never have pictured her as Groete’s older sister.

Furthermore, from the look of it, she couldn’t care less if Groete was dead or not. As a matter of fact, she might actually be happy if he were actually dead.

“It’s interesting how a person that is so weak is the master of this Blood Demon...” While Nie Tian was in his daze, Zelia giggled and looked at a Greater Heaven stage expert from the Blood Sect. With

a casual wave of her hand, a black spear, which seemed to have appeared out of nowhere, shot towards him.

The black spear flew so fast that, like a bolt of lightning, it went through the Greater Heaven stage expert in the blink of an eye.

SHEW!

Immediately after killing the man, the black spear flew back into her hand.

She tilted her head sideways as she looked at Nie Tian. A faint smile could still be seen at the corner of her mouth.

Upon witnessing this scene, a surge of coldness ran through Nie Tian's body.

Hong Can and Zou Yi, who had been fighting low-tier outsiders that had been coming at them from all directions, witnessed the astounding scene and called out, with shock in their eyes, "Protect Nie Tian!"

They both knew that only Nie Tian could manipulate the Bone Blood Demon and thus determine how the war went. Therefore, they both feared for his safety.

SHEW!



Zelia was still smiling as the black spear once again flew out of her small palm.

It whizzed through the forehead of another Greater Heaven expert from the Blood Sect, and the corpse collapsed not far from Nie Tian.

“Weaklings.” Zelia held out her hand, palm facing up, and the black spear appeared in it in the next moment.

Her eyes, which were glittering with a purple light, swept through all the Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors who were now gathered by Nie Tian’s side, with an expression on her face as if this was no more than a game to her.

Every Qi warrior who met her gaze felt like they had been thrown into an icy pit, and were overwhelmed by coldness and fear.

“Kill her!” Without any hesitation, Nie Tian issued the command to the Bone Blood Demon. He couldn’t bear to see her kill people like she was crushing bugs.

**FIZZ! FIZZ!**

All of a sudden, numerous blood auras shot out from every part of the Bone Blood Demon and flew towards Zelia at an extremely high speed.

As Zelia let out a giggle, the outline of her small body suddenly

become blurry, as if the space around her had somehow shaken slightly.

In the next moment, she vanished from Nie Tian's sight, and reappeared behind the Bone Blood Demon.

With a smooth thrust of the black spear in her hand, she penetrated the spiritual power shield of another Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior, and a split second later, the Qi warrior himself.

The Bone Blood Demon immediately turned its gigantic body around, and the bloody auras also circled back and whizzed towards Zelia again.

“Hahaha!” Zelia laughed as she once again blurred into action and reappeared in the next moment by the side of another Greater Heaven stage expert from the Blood Sect.

The black spear in her hand turned into a flood dragon before it snapped its jaws toward that Blood Sect expert.

The raging demon Qi behind her madly converged onto the flood dragon before the frenzied dragon pierced through its victim's body.

In such a short period of time, three Greater Heaven stage experts had died by her hands.

More importantly, none of them could even put up a fight.

Not only did Nie Tian have a grim expression on his face, but the expressions on Hong Can and Zou Yi's faces were also grimmer than ever.

None of them had ever seen someone kill like she had.

“Attack her together!” Zou Yi screamed as he used the Ghost Sect's psychic magics to create several fierce ghosts with his psychic power, before unleashing them towards Zelia's soul.

Nie Tian immediately sensed a layer of psychic power flowing out of Zelia, creating a spherical shield with her at the center.

Zelia smiled and said, “You must have a death wish!”

Strings of purple light that resembled lightning bolts suddenly appeared in her pupils and began to rapidly interweave with each other. From the look of it, she had also applied soul magics that only high-tier outsiders could master.

“Ahhh!!” Zou Yi held his head with his hands as he let out miserable cries; blood spilled out of his nose, eyes, and ears.

It was as if Zou Yi had sustained severe injuries in a flash.

The Ghost Sect had always been known for their powerful psychic magics, and Zou Yi, who was a middle Greater Heaven

stage expert, was by no means weak. Even still, Zelia almost killed him with a single blow.

“It’s not fun. I don’t wanna play with you anymore,” Zelia twitched her mouth and said with a bored expression on her face.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

All of a sudden, fiendish-looking plants grew out of the earth that everyone was standing on. They were either black or purple in color, and they seemed to have been lurking under the ground for some time, waiting for Zelia to summon them.

Hong Can stood aghast. “Demon plants!”

The plants that could be seen everywhere grew madly, and soon became more than ten meters tall.

Nie Tian looked down with rapt attention, and found that close to the ground, there was a layer of demon Qi so thick that it seemed to have liquidized, which was providing the plants with nutrients, making them grow at an astonishing speed.

Suddenly, numerous purple flowers grew out of the tops of the weeds.

Each and every one of them was the size of a human head and, upon a closer look, shared the same shape and color as the flowers that grew on Zelia’s torso.

“Let’s get out of here!!” Hong Can called out to Nie Tian.

Nie Tian simultaneously issued the command to the Bone Blood Demon. However, he looked down and saw that the Bone Blood Demon’s legs had already been trapped by the vines of those vigorous plants.

It was at that moment that the flowers flew off of the plants and rotated as they chased after every living being in the area.

## Chapter 219: Bloodline Awakening

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Everything happened so fast that by the time Nie Tian had realized the danger, the purple flowers had already left the plants and chased after all the Greater Heaven stage experts like countless rotating blossoms made of sharp blades.

Meanwhile, the Bone Blood Demon had been tangled up by the plants and was experiencing great difficulty in moving its legs.

Nie Tian unleashed his psychic awareness to examine his surroundings, and was vaguely able to sense that a continuous stream of strange aura, which thrummed with fluctuating surges of a mysterious energy, was flowing out of Zelia and quietly infusing into the ground.

“This is her bloodline talent!” Nie Tian, who had recently awakened his first bloodline talent, immediately realized that Zelia was using her bloodline talent to infuse the plants with rich demon Qi, and therefore provide them with the life force they needed to grow rapidly.

BANG!

For every bit the Bone Blood Demon moved its legs, numerous vines would break and fall to the ground before they turned into purple liquid and seeped back into the earth as a fertilizer.

At the same time, more new plants would crawl up the Bone Blood Demon's legs in an attempt to hold it down.

POOH!

A purple flower rammed right into a Blood Sect expert's chest like a cannon shell. His chest immediately became a bloody mess, with big chunks of flesh flung out from his body by the rotating, razor-like petals.

FIZZ!

Then the devilish flower exploded, filling the area with a cluster of raging, purple flames.

Engulfed by the flames, the Greater Heaven stage expert's skin and flesh rapidly melted away from his bones as he soon became nothing but a skeleton.

“Corrosive flames!” Nie Tian's expression flickered.

The flowers alone were already dreadful enough. He didn't expect that they could also create acidic flames that even Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors couldn't withstand upon exploding.

“It's your turn now.” A vicious smile appeared on Zelia's face as her eyes that resembled two glittering, purple gems fixed on Nie Tian.

PUFF! PUFF!

Several flowers suddenly exploded and turned into a dozen clusters of purple flames.

The corrosive flames seemed to have their own souls as they swiftly avoided the Bone Blood Demon's blocking hands and flew towards Nie Tian, who was standing on the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder.

Faint, lavender-colored smoke lingered in the space that the purple flames sailed through.

Face very grim, Nie Tian racked in his brain for a way to defend against the incoming flames while controlling the Bone Blood Demon with his will.

Just as he felt that he was at his wits' end, he heard a series of rapid and vigorous heartbeats from the Bone Blood Demon.

He immediately turned around to look at the Bone Blood Demon's eyes, which were a mysterious green color, similar to Ghost Eye's pupils.

As its heart pounded faster and faster, its grayish-green eyes gradually shed their original color and took on a dark-gray color.

Numerous fine threads could be seen swimming about within those eyes as they occasionally glittered with bright light.



Then, Nie Tian looked down towards the Bone Blood Demon's chest, and saw its giant heart throbbing abnormally rapidly behind those impenetrable rib bones.

ROOOOOOAR!

The Bone Blood Demon threw its head back and roared. An intense aura of death spread out with it at the center.

Nie Tian unleashed his psychic awareness to scan his surroundings, and saw that the gray aura was rapidly extending in every direction, as if it were bringing death to the entire area.

“Bloodline power!” For the first time, Zelia's expression flickered, her delicate face turning pale all of a sudden.

In the next moment, Nie Tian noticed that the twisted plants around the Bone Blood Demon that were still madly growing out of the ground seemed to have suddenly reached the end of their lives and rapidly withered away.

The clusters of purple flames that were coming straight at him also immediately dissipated.

“Eighth level bloodline power!” Face ghastly, Zelia coughed up a mouthful of blood and stumbled backwards, before dashing straight back into the enormous vortex of demon Qi.

As the aura of death spread further into the surroundings, all the

plants withered and died.

Upon seeing this scene, Hong Can, Zou Yi, and the others also ran away from Nie Tian and the Bone Blood Demon at the fastest speed possible, fearing that the gray, deadly aura would catch up to them.

After all, they had witnessed all the plants withering away and all the flowers exploding as soon as they were enveloped by that aura.

Even the flames that were created from the explosion of the flowers only lasted for a second before being extinguished.

Not a single sign of life could now be found within a three hundred meter radius of the Bone Blood Demon.

Nie Tian, who was still standing on the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder, was also greatly shaken by this scene. Just as he began to fear for his own safety, he suddenly sensed, with his psychic awareness, that he was enveloped by a green energy shield that was invisible to the naked eye.

It was the green energy that had protected him from the harm of the deadly aura.

“Bloodline power: Death! A bloodline talent that only Bone Giants can awaken!”

Nie Tian trembled slightly and experienced a numbing sensation

in his scalp, since he was shocked to his core by the might of the Bone Blood Demon's bloodline talent.

Back when Li Jing had taught him the Demon Driving Incantation, she had explained the uniqueness of this Bone Blood Demon to him, and told him that Bone Giants were a strong race who lived in the depths of the river of stars.

The mysterious truths of death ran through their veins, making them extremely powerful and dangerous.

Perhaps that was the reason why infusing one of them with life power and turning it into a Blood Demon had been so difficult.

After all, life power and death power were like fire and ice; they negated each other.

After snapping out of his daze, Nie Tian said, "Let's get over there!" pointing towards an area where a significant amount of low-tier outsiders were gathered in the rich demon Qi.

He wanted to kill as many outsiders as he could while the Bone Blood Demon was still unleashing that deadly, gray aura.

CRACKLE! CRACKLE!

The Bone Blood Demon strode in the direction that Nie Tian had indicated, the three hundred meters-radius field filled with a deadly aura moving along with it.

Nie Tian watched, his eyes wide, as one low-tier outsider after another collapsed to the ground with loud crashes soon after they were enveloped by the aura of death.

As the Bone Blood Demon marched on with huge steps, more and more low-tier outsiders dropped dead.

Their power levels were all far too low to possess the ability to awaken any powerful bloodline talent or profound soul power.

The unbridgeable gap between their strengths and the Bone Blood Demon's made it impossible for them to escape its sphere of death.

Just like that, the Bone Blood Demon killed more than one hundred low-tier outsiders with its aura of death in a few seconds.

It was at that moment that Nie Tian sensed that the Bone Blood Demon's eyes gradually began resuming their original grayish-green color, and the death power in the field it had created was also becoming unstable and weakening bit by bit.

At the same time, the coverage of the gray aura shrunk from three hundred meters to one hundred meters.

"It must have awakened its bloodline power with the energy it had absorbed from the outsiders' blood, and now it's running out of energy." Nie Tian instantly realized that the Bone Blood

Demon's sphere of death wouldn't last much longer.

Therefore, he hastily commanded it to lunge into the heart of the demon Qi vortex, where more low-tier outsiders were gathered.

Before entering the demon Qi vortex, Nie Tian summoned every type of power to form a chaotic magnetic field that could barely envelop him.

"Is that death power?!" Li Jing exclaimed while flashing about in the deepest part of the demon Qi vortex, fighting two high-tier outsiders at close quarters.

She suddenly sensed the arrival of the Bone Blood Demon and turned her head, eyes glittering with bright light.

Under her gaze, waves of low-tier outsiders fell like countless withered weeds as the Bone Blood Demon approached. Wherever it walked, all lives went extinct.

Li Jing's eyes widened. "Don't tell me that it awakened its bloodline power as a Bone Giant!"

Looking at Nie Tian, who was standing atop the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder, her slender eyebrows twitched as a subtle elation appeared on her face.

...

Seeing that the little girl had returned, another high-tier outsider approached her and said, “Lady Zelia!”

“Bad news,” Zelia said. “The Blood Demon created from a Bone Giant has awakened its bloodline talent: Death.”

Upon hearing her words, all the high-tier outsiders shot their gazes toward the Bone Blood Demon and the young man on its shoulder, Nie Tian.

# Chapter 220: Peak Battle Prowess

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Under his enemies' gazes, Nie Tian showed no sign of fear. Instead, he grinned and issued a command to the Bone Blood Demon, "Continue!" Although the Bone Blood Demon's sphere of death had already shrunk to a one hundred meter radius, it rampaged through the crowd of low-tier outsiders as it always had, reaping many lives.

One low-tier outsider after another was cut down, bereft of any life force.

Standing atop the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder, Nie Tian observed the overall situation as he continued to issue commands to the Bone Blood Demon.

Although his vision had been blocked the moment he commanded the Bone Blood Demon to charge into the demon Qi vortex, he had already wrapped seven spots of starlight with his psychic awareness and flown them out into the battlefield to serve as his Heaven Eyes.

They enabled him to have a clear view of everything that was happening within the demon Qi vortex.

He noticed that it seemed that all the human Qi warriors, who had daringly charged into the demon Qi vortex to fight outsiders, were able to resist the erosion of the demon Qi with little effort.

At that moment, Ghost Eye, sectmaster of the Ghost Sect, was

manipulating his two Heaven Ghosts and nine Earth Ghosts to fight two powerful high-tier outsiders.

Those two high-tier outsiders seemed as skinny as Ghost Eye; one of them was handling the Heaven Ghosts and Earth Ghosts, while the other was in close combat with Ghost Eye.

Strong auras hovered around Ghost Eye and his two opponents like invisible ghosts, clearing the area they were in of the least bit of demon Qi.

Apparently, there was also a battle of souls going on between them.

Off to the side, Li Jing, who was sitting on her Blood Lotus, was also dealing with two high-tier outsiders at the same time.

The blood shadow that had come out of the lotus was chasing after one high-tier outsider while Li Jing formed mysterious hand seals, using the Bloodflow Reverse Incantation to attack another.

Not far from Li Jing, a burly human Qi warrior wearing sackcloth was using a wide sword to fight against a male high-tier outsider, who was significantly taller than him and had his whole body covered in pitch-black armor.

The fight between that burly man and his opponent instantly caught Nie Tian's attention.



He commanded the Heaven Eye that was floating near them to quietly move closer to get an accurate assessment of the high-tier outsider's battle prowess.

However, while the Heaven Eye was still two hundred meters away from it, the high-tier outsider, who was fighting the burly man, seemed to notice it.

All of a sudden, more black armor grew out of his body, covering every inch of his skin, leaving only his purple eyes, which were now fixed on the approaching Heaven Eye.

BANG!

As soon as the outsider laid his devilish eyes on the Heaven Eye, it exploded.

A violent tremor ran through Nie Tian's body as he experienced a excruciating pain in his soul. Even his pupils dilated slightly.

A sense of fear rose in his heart as he realized that this high-tier outsider must be the most powerful one in the demon Qi vortex.

Now with only six Heaven Eyes at his disposal, Nie Tian didn't dare to command another one to approach that outsider. Instead, he deployed them around it, and made sure that each of them was a safe distance away from it.

Then, Nie Tian took note that the powerful high-tier outsider

wasn't using any tools while fighting the burly Qi warrior.

He only extended his giant hands to summon power from the surrounding demon Qi and form bright, purple light balls on his palms.

Light-purple veins could be seen within the light balls, embellished with numerous shimmering, bright dots.

Each purple light ball was like a fist that carried terrifying power as they were cast toward the burly man, who would immediately raise his wide sword to defend.

Upon colliding, a heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing sound would filled the air, along with the purple light dots that were sent flying in all directions after the light balls exploded.

Nie Tian kept track of the flying, shimmering light dots via his Heaven Eyes, and saw that, instead of dissipating into the air or falling to the ground, they floated to the ancient stone city where Qi warriors from the Ghost Sect and Hell Sect were fighting low-tier outsiders.

Whoever made contact with them, no matter if they were human Qi warriors or low-tier outsiders, would immediately explode and become pieces of flesh flying everywhere, dying a horrible death.

Nie Tian was flabbergasted.

He immediately realized that the armored high-tier outsider had infused those purple light balls with his bloodline power, and the shimmering light dots that looked like tiny amethysts were the embodiment of his wild bloodline power.

Only a few fragments of them could kill any low-tier outsider or Greater Heaven stage human Qi warrior upon contact.

Furthermore, it seemed that those tiny bits of that high-tier outsider's bloodline power didn't even bother to distinguish friend from foe. Whoever they touched, perished.

It was as if the low-tier outsiders who were too weak to withstand the blow also deserved to die.

Apparently, that high-tier outsider despised all lives that were weaker and had inferior status than him, including the low-tier outsiders who had sworn their allegiance to him.

“He's so strong!!” Nie Tian couldn't hide his fear. It was at that moment that it suddenly occurred to him who that burly man, the opponent of that high-tier outsider, might be: the strongest Qi warrior of the Realm of Flame Heaven, Chang Sen!

Only the strongest expert, Chang Sen from the Hell Sect, could match up to the strength of that formidable high-tier outsider. Anyone else would have died already.

After having come to this realization, Nie Tian commanded the

Bone Blood Demon to stay away from Chang Sen and that high-tier outsider.

He was fairly certain that even the Bone Blood Demon wouldn't survive a battle against that deadly high-tier outsider.

After retracting his attention from Chang Sen and the high-tier outsider, he redirected his six Heaven Eyes to float toward the ancient city made from green stones, where he saw numerous Greater Heaven stage experts from the Hell Sect and Ghost Sect rushing out of the city gates to fight low-tier outsiders that outnumbered them by several times.

All those who stayed behind the city walls were disciples who had cultivation bases lower than the Greater Heaven stage, and thus couldn't fight within the demon Qi.

They could only rely on the Wail of Myriad Ghosts grand formation to protect them from the erosion of the demon Qi.

Upon a closer look, even the Greater Heaven stage experts only seemed qualified to fight low-tier outsiders; those who were engaged in fierce battles with high-tier outsiders were all at the Worldly realm or Profound realm.

They were the ones who could pose a threat to the high-tier outsiders and make a difference in the battle that was going to determine the future of the Realm of Flame Heaven.

“Get over there!” Having obtained a thorough understanding of the situation, Nie Tian continued to command the Bone Blood Demon to go to areas where low-tier outsiders were gathered, in an attempt to kill as many low-tier outsiders as possible with the Bone Blood Demon’s death aura while it still persisted.

As one low-tier outsider after another dropped dead, the Bone Blood Demon’s life power, which Nie Tian had infused into it with his new-found bloodline talent, was rapidly running out.

“Something is wrong. The Bone Blood Demon is losing its life power way too fast.” As Nie Tian pondered the reason, he realized that since the Bone Blood Demon had established its sphere of death, the life power in its heart was declining at a speed that was ten times faster than before.

At this point, he had a feeling that it wouldn’t be long before the Bone Blood Demon completely drained its life power.

Originally, according to the feedback he had received from the life power he had infused into the Bone Blood Demon’s heart, he had estimated that the Bone Blood Demon would remain active for about ten days.

However, now that the Bone Blood Demon was going all-out to kill low-tier outsiders with its death aura, Nie Tian sensed that it wouldn’t be long before it fell into another deep slumber.

Nie Tian received a sudden enlightenment. “Death power negates life power. Whenever the Bone Blood Demon uses death power,

which was its bloodline power, it will cause it to over-consume and soon run out of its life power.”

SHEW!

It was at that moment that two lines of purple light that resembled two shooting stars appeared in the distant sky. Nie Tian examined them with his Heaven Eyes, and was surprised to find that they were Groete and Sarah, who he had met in the Blood Sect.

Nie Tian's expression flickered.

Sarah was as strong as Li Jing. Her arrival might once again tip the balance in favor of the outsiders.

The thought of it made Nie Tian worry.

However, he noticed that both Groete and Sarah seemed extremely weak at that moment, the devilish light they emanated constantly flickering.

Nie Tian grew confused.

“Lady Zelia! Lord Caro!” The moment Sarah flew into the demon Qi vortex, she called out in their language. “A powerful expert, who didn't seem to be from the Realm of Flame Heaven, ambushed us on our way back from the Blood Sect. Lord Groete and I are the only survivors. From what I can tell, that person was as strong as

you are, my lord. He could have killed us too, but he didn't."

"What?!" Zelia exclaimed. "A person who's as strong as Uncle Caro?! Are you sure, Sarah?"

"Yes, I'm very certain of that!" Fear could still be seen between Sarah's furrowed, slender eyebrows. "I think it's about time we returned to our clan, my lady. If my speculations are correct, Qi warriors from the other eight realms may have already decided to come to aid the Realm of Flame Heaven."

Numerous expression flashed across Zelia's small face. After a moment of silence, she nodded and said, "I see."

...

At the border between the Ghost Sect and Blood Sect's territories.

An old man was sitting in a slack fashion with his back against a giant, ancient tree, looking up at the spiritual energy that was fluctuating in the sky, as if he were pondering something.

Four high-tier outsiders were lying not far away from him, who were the ones who had invaded the Blood Sect with Groete and Sarah.

From the look of it, they had been dead for quite some time.

“The Astarte clan... The Realm of Flame Heaven used to belong to the Astarte clan. The reason why the Astarte clan has returned to the Realm of Flame Heaven must be that they have learned about the turbulences that are going on within the Domain of the Falling Stars. However, they should know that even if they somehow manage to sack the Realm of Flame Heaven, they can’t possibly take the entire Domain of the Falling Stars.

“Therefore, the purpose of their invasion of the Realm of Flame Heaven might just be to temper their young lord and lady.

“Every tempering event has its limit.

“Now that I’ve personally tempered one of them, it’s about time that this event ended.

“By the time I get to the Ghost Sect, the members of the Astarte clan might have already returned to their own realm.” Muttering to himself, the old man slowly rose to his feet and paced his steps as he walked towards the Ghost sect.

If Nie Tian were here, he would have recognized this old man, since he was none other than the doctor who had saved Nie Tian’s life and informed him of the Heaven Gate trial, Hua Mu.



# Chapter 221: Disturbance Calms

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In the Ghost Sect...

Nie Tian was originally worried that the arrival of Sarah and Groete would tip the scales against him.

However, while he was pondering the matter, Zelia's shout caught his ears. When he looked over, he saw an anxious expression on her face as she called out in the outsiders' language.

Then, a handful black pearls appeared in her splayed hand.

One after another, they rose into the sky before coming to a stop above the eye of the demon Qi vortex.

They generated a great attractive force to the raging demon Qi below it and gradually merged into one giant pearl.

All of a sudden, that one giant pearl unleashed a strong energy wave into its surroundings and shot up into the heavens.

As it did, the vast demon Qi vortex that had enveloped the entire Ghost Sect rose along with it.

It was at that moment that all the high-tier outsiders seemed to receive messages; they all stopped fighting their opponents and rose up into the sky.

Upon seeing the situation, some powerful Qi warriors, under the leadership of Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing, also leapt into the air in an attempt to chase after their enemies. However, they were all pushed back to the earth by an irresistible, mysterious force.

They could only watch as the vortex of demon Qi rose higher and higher, and when it reached a certain height, it began to move horizontally.

At that moment, the Ghost Sect, which had been covered in raging demon Qi for a very long time, finally saw sunlight again. The ancient city made of green stones was once again visible under the setting sun.

Staring at the departing demon Qi vortex, powerful experts from the Ghost Sect and Hell Sect discussed the matter amongst themselves. Confusion could be seen on their faces.

“What happened? The outsider army has retreated?”

“This is strange. I saw two high-tier outsiders coming. Why did they leave when they had more added to their force?”

“Is their invasion of the Realm of Flame Heaven over?”

“What in the world is going on?”

...

At the same time, the numerous outsiders that had been besieging and attacking the Cloudsoaring Sect and Mystic Mist Sect also seemed to have received orders, and rapidly retreated like an ebbing tide.

Even the outsiders who had been slaughtering commoners in mortal cities seemed to receive orders, and rapidly withdrew from where they were.

All outsider forces, wherever they were, began to move towards the Hell sect.

Standing on the Bone Blood Demon's shoulder, Nie Tian couldn't spot another outsider in his vicinity. Without a target, the Bone Blood Demon stood still in its original position, staring at nothing.

A short while later, the circle of death it had created with its death power also vanished completely.

Only then did the mountain-like Bone Blood Demon run out of life power and collapse to the ground.

Nie Tian had noticed the signs of its imminent collapse, and jumped off of it before it did.

Hong Can from the Hell Sect, Zou Yi from the Ghost Sect, and a

handful of survivors from the Blood Sect gathered to Nie Tian's side, confusion written across their faces.

They shifted their curious gazes between the collapsed Bone Blood Demon and the empty sky.

Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing also retracted their power. Ghost Eye's two Heaven Ghosts flew back into his pupils, and his nine Earth Ghosts went back into the banners. Similarly, the enormous blood shadow flew back into Li Jing's Blood Lotus and became dormant again.

Sitting on the Blood Lotus, Li Jing turned to Chang Sen and said, "You know their language. Did you hear what they said? Why did they leave so abruptly?"

Ghost Eye also looked at Chang Sen with a confused expression on his face and waited for his answer.

"Those two high-tier outsiders who came last were ambushed by a Qi warrior that was as strong as Caro on their way here. However, that person intentionally spared their lives and killed the others they were with." With a frown, Chang Sen continued, "The appearance of that person made the outsiders assume powerful experts from the other eight realms had come to help defend the Realm of Flame Heaven.

"They were afraid that more powerful experts from the other realms would show up, so they decided to take the initiative and retreat." Chang Sen also seemed quite confused as he shook his

head and said, “However, as far as I know, it’s impossible for those from the other realms to come to our aid. They are all eagerly waiting for the outsiders to uproot us from the Realm of Flame Heaven. Even if we somehow prevailed, we would have lost most of our strength after the bloodbath.”

“At that time, they would have been able to swoop in and reap the Realm of Flame Heaven without breaking a sweat.”

“Someone as strong as Caro?” Ghost Eye’s expression flickered. He knew very well that Caro was the most formidable outsider of all those that had descended upon the Realm of Flame Heaven this time, and if he were his opponent, instead of Chang Sen, he wouldn’t have stood a chance.

“Yes, that’s what that outsider said,” said Chang Sen.

Li Jing let out a sigh of relief and said, “Whoever that person is, he put an end to the war, and the situation in the Realm of Flame Heaven is finally stable again. The entire Realm of Flame Heaven has sustained heavy losses from this war. We might need years to recover our strength.

“We’ve taken safety and survival for granted for too long. This calamity actually may not be the worst thing for us.” Chang Sen pondered for a moment and said, “Only desperate situations like this will stimulate those who are truly capable to display their remarkable talent! Bloody wars will help them grow and the future of the Realm of Flame Heaven will depend on them.”

With these words, he swept his gaze over the crowd of survivors, who were now gathered at his side.

Finally, his gaze landed on Nie Tian, who was standing in front of the collapsed Bone Blood Demon. He turned to Li Jing and said, “What’s the story with that kid? Why did the Bone Blood Demon your sect spent years refining take orders from him? It seems that he’s only at the Lesser Heaven stage and doesn’t practice your sect’s secret magics.”

Ghost Eye’s gruesome eyes were also fixed on Nie Tian as he said, “I saw him kill quite a few low-tier outsiders with the Bone Blood Demon, and he even dealt a great blow to the noble outsider, who they referred to as Zelia. It’s hard to believe that a Lesser Heaven stage junior played such an important role in this critical battle.

“If it wasn’t for the fact he had awakened the Bone Blood Demon, the Blood Sect might have shared the same fate as the Grayvale Sect.” Li Jing sighed softly.

“Who is he?” Chang Sen asked.

“He’s the disciple Wu Ji recently took in,” Li Jing answered. Then, she suddenly tilted her chin and said with a determined tone, “But he’s already a member of the Blood Sect. The Bone Blood Demon is too important to us. I’ll never allow the person who controls it to leave the Blood Sect!”

Surprise stretched across Chang Sen’s face as he said, “Wu Ji’s disciple?! Eccentric Wu surely know how to pick his disciples! No

one can beat him at that. You've got to give him that."

"I told you that he's a disciple of the Blood Sect now!" Li Jing said in an imposing manner.

"Well, you can talk to Wu Ji about that." Chang Sen didn't take a stance in the matter. He went on to say with a grim expression, "The Realm of Flame Heaven is not safe yet. Those from the other eight realms will soon learn about the retreat of the outsiders. I believe it won't be long before powerful experts from the Realm of Earth Sieve and the Realm of Dark Underworld descend upon our realm."

Upon hearing these words, neither Ghost Eye or Li Jing were in the mood to talk. They both flew towards the Ghost Sect's green stone city.

The Qi warriors from the Hell Sect, Ghost Sect, and Blood Sect also followed them back into the city.

Only Nie Tian remained in his original position, staring blanking at the Bone Blood Demon that had collapsed to the ground.

With his strength, he couldn't possibly carry it from the wasteland where he was standing to the stone city.

Fortunately, Li Jing realized his concern, and rapidly flew back to his side from the city.

Sitting on her Blood Lotus, she said to Nie Tian, “Follow me.”

As soon as she uttered these words, numerous blood-colored ribbons flew out of the Blood Lotus. They wrapped around the gigantic Bone Blood Demon like pack ropes and pulled it up into the air.

“You come with me.” With a flip of Li Jing’s finger, a blood thread that was as soft as cotton stretched out, wreathed Nie Tian, and dragged him to the top of the Blood Lotus.

While flying the Bone Blood Demon back to the Ghost sect, Li Jing shot a glance at Nie Tian and asked, “Didn’t you tell me that it would remain active for ten days?”

“It sped up its consumption of life power when it unleashed its bloodline power.” Nie Tian told the truth.

“I see.” Li Jing nodded and said in a domineering tone, “From now on, whoever asks about you, you’ll tell them that you’ve become a member of the Blood Sect.”



# Chapter 222: Three Great Rifts

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In the mountain range where the Hell Sect was located.

Surrounded by three mountain peaks that were thousands of meters high, wisps of demon Qi were oozing out of a huge, dark pit that seemed to lead to the deepest parts of the earth.

The demon Qi that flowed out of the pit gradually filled the area in a fifty miles range, within which not a single wisp of the spiritual Qi of heaven and earth could be found.

WHOOSH!

The enormous demon Qi vortex appeared from the direction of the Ghost Sect and flew toward the huge pit while carrying numerous low-tier outsiders.

As the vortex landed next to the bottomless pit, a significant amount of low-tier outsiders marched out of it and stepped to the edge of the pit.

Under the leadership of Zelia, Caro, and Groete, high-tier outsiders also descended to the edge of the pit from the top of the demon Qi vortex.

At that moment, strong spatial fluctuations were suddenly born within the pit, as if it had become a portal that led to another heaven and earth.

“The portal is open. The three rifts that lead to our world have all opened.” Face calm, Zelia looked into the unfathomable, dark pit. It seemed that she wasn’t very frustrated by their failure to take the Realm of Flame Heaven. “Now that the legacies of the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace have reappeared in this world through the Heaven Gate trial, the game between the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace and us has finally begun.

“Those three rifts were sealed by saints from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace thousands of years ago.

“Now they’re open again. The Qi warriors from the Domain of the Falling Stars won’t be able to seal them with their strength alone.

“Only by obtaining the first, middle, and last part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation will a person be able to learn the secret magic of the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace, and use it to channel power from the starry river to reseal the rifts.” With these words, Zelia turned to look at the three enormous mountain peaks surrounding the pit.

She knew perfectly well that they weren’t naturally formed. Instead, they had been moved from other parts of the Realm of Flame Heaven by saints with divine abilities from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace.

There were powerful, secret formations hidden within each of the mountain peaks, with every formation having its own central

hub.

Only the person who had all three parts of the Fragmentary Star Incantation would be able to use the incantation to restart the grand spell formation and channel power from the starry river to seal the portal.

Caro, who was covered in black armor from head to toe, asked, “My lord, the other two rifts are in the Realm of Mystic Heaven and the Realm of a Thousand Devastations. The human Qi warriors in those realms are more powerful than the ones in the Realm of Flame Heaven. Do they have the ability to stop the spread of the demon Qi?”

“No, they don’t.” Arrogance could be seen on Zelia’s face. “If they did have a way to do that, they wouldn’t have sent their most powerful experts to the Heaven Gate trial and fought others to the death for the three parts of the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace.

“The reason why the powerful clans from our world chose not to invade the Realm of Mystic Heaven and the Realm of a Thousand Devastations was that they knew that they wouldn’t have the best odds if they fought those powerful experts on their turf, where the spiritual Qi of heaven and earth was everywhere.

“Meanwhile, powerful human experts from the Domain of the Falling Stars probably won’t dare to travel to our world via the spatial rifts.

“The reason why we chose to attack the Realm of Flame Heaven

was because human cultivators in this realm are too weak to stop us from traveling here and returning.

“However, it’s safe to say that the moment the three great spatial rifts are opened, the war between us and the Domain of the Falling Stars will have begun.

“If the three great spatial rifts can stay open, it’ll take no more than five decades to fill the Realm of Mystic Heaven, the Realm of a Thousand Devastations, and the Realm of Flame Heaven with demon Qi.

“If we step into the three realms via the spatial rifts at that time, we’ll definitely gain the upper hand in fighting against the human Qi warriors.

“That’s when we’ll start the full-blown war against the Domain of the Falling Stars.”

Caro frowned and said, “The leaders of the Domain of the Falling Stars probably also know about this. I bet they’ll try to find a way to gather all three parts of the Fragmentary Star Incantation. If they somehow manage to do that, they would be able to reseal the spatial rifts in the three realms. What will we do if it comes to that?”

Zelia chuckled and said, “It’s not as easy as it sounds. The Qi warrior powers in the Domain of the Falling Stars aren’t as united as you may think. They fight and kill each other all the time. What else do you think was stopping powerful experts from the other

realms from coming to help defend the Realm of Flame Heaven?

“It’s almost impossible for one person to gather all three parts of the incantation. Furthermore, that person will need to be strong and intelligent enough to achieve total mastery of the legacies that hide with those magical symbols. Only then will they be able to restart the spell formations.

“Whoever obtains a part of the incantation won’t give it away so easily. It’ll take quite some time for one person to get all the parts, and during that period of time, the Domain of the Falling Stars will remain in turmoil.

“Also, as soon as we go back, I’ll request that our monarchs cast secret bloodline spells to speed up the spread of the demon Qi.

“If they agree to help, we might only need ten years to fill the Realm of Mystic Heaven, the Realm of a Thousand Devastations, and the Realm of Flame Heaven with demon Qi, and turn them into our paradise.

“It’s just a matter of time before all nine realms of the Domain of the Falling Stars become our colonies. The great clans have longed for them for quite some time. Nothing will stop them.” With these words, Zelia softly waved her hand and said, “Let’s go home.”

Immediately afterwards, the enormous demon Qi vortex moved over and enveloped all high-tier and low-tier outsiders. Then it carried them into the depths of the bottomless pit and vanished in the spatial fluctuations.

In the Realm of a Thousand Devastations...

Wisps of demon Qi were coming out of a huge pit in the ground that was exactly the same as the one in the Realm of Flame Heaven.

Around the unfathomable pit were also three exceptionally high mountain peaks that reached thousands of meters into the sky.

On the top of one mountain peak stood a handful human cultivators. They all had grim expressions on their faces as they looked down at the pit that was wreathed with demon Qi.

“The fact that the outsiders aren’t here doesn’t mean that they won’t come. As long as this spatial rift isn’t sealed, more demon Qi will pour into the Realm of a Thousand Devastations.”

“If we don’t do anything about it, we won’t have a smidgen of spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth left in our realm in a few decades. At that time, the truly powerful outsider clans will throw their full strength at the Domain of the Falling Stars.”

“None of our disciples returned from the Heaven Gate trial with legacies from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace. Even the Heaven Palace Sect in the Realm of Mystic Heaven only got their hands on one part. I heard that the other two parts were seized by a kid from the Realm of Flame Heaven, as unbelievable as it sounds.”

“The Heaven Palace Sect originally planned to have Su Lin and Ning Yang obtain all three parts of the incantation, but they somehow failed.”

“If we can’t unite the three parts, we won’t be able to seal the three great spatial rifts and stop the poisonous demon Qi from spreading into the Realm of Mystic Heaven, the Realm of a Thousand Devastations, and the Realm of Flame Heaven. If we can’t do that, the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in these realms will grow fainter and fainter, and soon be completely replaced by demon Qi. At that time, these realms will no longer be suitable for Qi warriors to practice cultivation in.”

“Rest assured, this is a more urgent matter to the Heaven Palace Sect than us. The spatial rift in the Realm of Mystic Heaven appeared right outside the Heaven Palace Sect. If the demon Qi keeps spreading, they’ll be forced to move their sect to another location. They won’t let others have the other two parts of the incantation for long.”

“I guess you’re right. So let’s wait and see what the Heaven Palace Sect’s next move will be.”

After observing the huge pit and discussing for a short while, the experts from the Realm of a Thousand Devastations soared into the sky and disappeared.

In the Heaven Palace Sect, the realm of Mystic Heaven...

Su Lin and Ning Yang were on their knees in a magnificent stone palace. After bringing out all their encounters in the Heaven Gate trial, they bowed their heads low and fell into silence.

In the middle of the stone palace, a spirit was floating in front of them. It was so blurry and was flickering so much that it seemed that it could disappear at any moment.

After remaining silent for quite a while, the spirit said in a profound, calm voice, “If we can’t obtain the whole incantation, we won’t be able to seal the three great spatial rifts that lead to the demons’ world. If we sit around and let it happen, the Realm of Flame Heaven, the smallest of the three, will drown in demon Qi in no more than two decades.

“By that time, the Realm of Flame Heaven will completely lose its value, and all of its human residents will evacuate.

“If it comes to that, everything we’ve done will be in vain. I’ll send messages to the Realm of Earth Sieve and the Realm of Dark Underworld to tell them to stop their operations against the Realm of Flame Heaven. Meanwhile, I need you two to go to the Realm of Flame Heaven with my edict. You’ll find the boy who has the other two parts of the incantation and gather all three parts.”

At that moment, a command medallion that seemed to be made of gold and jade flew out from within the floating spirit and stopped in front of Ning Yang, floating.

“Show it to Chang Sen, sectmaster of the Hell Sect, and he’ll



know what to do.”

“Got it,” Ning Yang and Su Lin said simultaneously, their faces still facing the floor.

The floating spirit gave a cold harrumph. “If you two fail again this time, you know what punishment awaits, don’t you?”

Fear could be seen on Ning Yang and Su Lin’s ghastly faces as they couldn’t help but shiver.

# Chapter 223: The Escort

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Deep into the night, in the ancient, green stone city...

Since the outsiders had left the Ghost Sect, long-lost peace was stored to the city. Disciples of the Ghost Sect who were lucky enough to have survived the calamity were either weeping over their loved ones' deaths or cultivating wholeheartedly, preparing themselves for the challenges that were to come.

The sectmasters of the Hell Sect, the Ghost Sect, and the Blood Sect, along with their sect elders, were discussing their plans to deal with the pressure that might come from the other eight realms.

Nie Tian, on the other hand, was resting in a residence arranged for him by Zou Yi in the southwest part of the city.

The enormous Bone Blood Demon was placed in the middle of his courtyard, exposed under silver moonlight.

Nie Tian was sitting cross-legged in his room, the door to which was left open. He held an unfurled scroll in his hands, which carried an incantation that Li Jing had instructed him to memorize by heart.

Written on the scroll were the words: Blood Refining Incantation.

It was the Blood Sect's most fundamental spiritual incantation. Every disciple of the Blood Sect would have to practice cultivation with it.

Unlike the spiritual incantations of the other sects in the Realm of Flame Heaven, the Blood Refining Incantation needed to be practiced with spirit beast blood.

The Blood Refining Incantation would allow its users to absorb spiritual energy from spirit beast blood and channel it to their spiritual sea.

Aside from the Blood Refining Incantation, Li Jing had also bestowed three Blood Pills upon him, so that he could channel the spiritual power within them to his spiritual sea and thus create a vortex of blood power there.

Since the incantation was quite plain and simple, Nie Tian went through it and grasped the essence of it rapidly.

However, when he tried to refine a Blood Pill with it, he found that he couldn't channel the wisps of blood power that the Blood Pill released to his spiritual sea at all, no matter how hard he tried.

He discovered that some blood power wisps were attracted to his heart, where they were devoured by the green energy thread that resided in it, while the others dissipated into his blood on their way to his spiritual sea.

“The way the Blood Refining Incantation works is basically to gather blood power to the cultivator’s spiritual sea. It seems it doesn’t suit me very well.” By the time the medicinal efficacy of the Blood Pill wore out, Nie Tian threw the scroll back into his bracelet of holding and started meditating with his eyebrows slightly furrowed.

After a thorough self-examination, he found that, although the blood power of the Blood Pill had made him feel more energetic and the green energy thread in his heart seemed to have grown a bit larger, none of the blood power had flowed to his spiritual sea.

He didn’t understand what had gone wrong.

Subconsciously, he cast a glance at the Bone Blood Demon in the courtyard.

It immediately occurred to him that the Bone Blood Demon had used that very Incantation to refine the blood of numerous low-tier outsiders in the Blood Sect and the Ghost Sect, but as far as he knew, Bone Giants didn’t have dantians or spiritual seas.

The blood essence that the Bone Blood Demon had absorbed with the Blood Refining Incantation seemed to have also dispersed into its blood.

“Can this be because I have a special bloodline within me?” The thought suddenly occurred to Nie Tian.

“Blood Refining Incantation?” It was at that moment a figure appeared in the courtyard. Nie Tian’s eyes searched for the source of the voice, and then he saw a blurry figure in the courtyard. As the figure approached, it grew clearer and clearer.

“Mister Hua?” Nie Tian’s expression flickered. “What brings you here?”

“I’ve come for you,” A gentle smile appeared on Hua Mu’s face as he said. “I think I saw you practice the Blood Sect’s Blood Refining Incantation.”

Nie Tian nodded. “Yeah, but I don’t think it suits me.”

“You’re wrong.” Hua Mu shook his head and said with a sincere tone. “That incantation suits you perfectly. It’s just that you don’t need to stick to the method written on that scroll. You only need to use it to refine and accumulate blood power. Forget the rest.”

Nie Tian was shocked by Hua Mu’s words. “Just like the way I practiced it just now? That was the right way?”

“Yes, only those who don’t have a special bloodline in them will need to channel blood power to their spiritual sea. But you’re different. You have life blood running through your veins, and from what I can tell, you’ve already awakened your bloodline.” Hua Mu seemed a bit excited as he continued, “You can use the Blood Refining Incantation to strengthen your life blood, and that’s why I said this incantation suits you perfectly.”

“How did you know, Mr. Hua?!” Nie Tian was taken aback.

Then, he remembered that right before he had left for the Heaven Gate trial, Hua Mu told him that he might learn about his own secrets during the trial. At that time, he hadn't been able to understand what Hua Mu meant.

As he recalled it now, Hua Mu must have been talking about the green aura in his heart, which was the embodiment of his awakened bloodline power.

He had also awakened his first bloodline talent: Life Transfer.

The more he thought about it, the more he found that everything Hua Mu had done contained deep meanings.

“I saw your uniqueness the day I met you.” Hua Mu nodded and said.

Then, after a moment of silence, he sighed and continued, “Although, there's another reason why I helped refine your body and rid you of impurities.”

“What do you mean?” Nie Tian asked with a serious expression.

He was aware that Hua Mu had done many things to help him, whether it was killing Lai Yi and Gan Kang in the Scarlet Flame Mountain Range, or informing him about the Heaven Gate.

For that, he had been nothing but graceful.

“Just like your master, I’m also nearing the end of my life. I hope you can use your life blood to extend my lifespan for me. Of course, your current bloodline power level doesn’t allow you to do that now.” With a smile on his face, Hua Mu continued, “But I can wait for few more decades. I believe that, given time and considering your talent, it won’t be hard for you to give me more years then.”

“Life Transfer?!” Nie Tian’s expression flickered.

Hua Mu’s eyes lit up. “You’ve already awakened the Life Transfer bloodline talent?”

Nie Tian nodded and answered, “Yes, it’s the first and only bloodline talent I’ve awakened.”

“Excellent!” Hua Mu seemed very excited upon hearing Nie Tian’s answer. “This is amazing. I knew you had it in you! If that’s the case, you might just need ten years to accumulate enough strength to perform Life Transfer on me! I made the right choice!”

Then, Hua Mu went on to say, “By the way, your grandfather and aunt are safe. I took them to a safe place before Black Cloud City was flooded by low-tier outsiders. They are probably being taken to the Cloudsoaring Sect as we speak. Don’t you worry about them.”

Nie Tian hastily rose to his feet and bowed deeply towards Hua Mu. “Many thanks, Mr. Hua!!”

Hua Mu waved his hand and said, “There’s no need for this. Oh right, did you make any gains during the Heaven Gate trial?”

“I obtained the first and middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.” Nie Tian answered, without holding anything back.

For unknown reasons, he had a feeling that he could completely trust Hua Mu.

“You obtained the first and middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation?!” Hua Mu’s eyes widened.

Nie Tian raised his shirt and showed the two hexagrams on his chest to Hua Mu.

With a glimpse of it, Hua Mu’s eyes further widened and he shuddered slightly, as he seemed to be truly shocked.

Hua Mu stared at the hexagram for a while before moving his complicated gaze up to look Nie Tian in the eye while saying, “I already considered taking you to another realm after you got the Flame Dragon Armor. Now that you’ve obtained the first and middle parts of the Fragmentary Star Incantation, there are even more reasons that you can’t stay in the Realm of Flame Heaven.”

“What?!” Nie Tian was surprised.



“Those two hexagrams on your chest are of great importance. Their significance may surpass your imagination. If you continue to stay in the Realm of Flame Heaven, I’m afraid catastrophic things will happen to you, things even I won’t be able to protect you from.” Hua Mu took a deep breath and continued, “If you can trust me, leave with me tonight.”

“But my master Wu Ji and the sectmaster Li Jing will protect me.” Nie Tian explained.

Hua Mu shook his head. “They won’t be able to. If the Heaven Palace Sect from the Realm of Mystic Heaven demands something, no one in the entire Realm of Flame Heaven will dare to say no.”

“So... where do we go?” Nie Tian asked while he seemed to be in a state of bewilderment.

“I’ll take you to a place where you can sit the turmoils out, and then you can return to the Realm of Flame Heaven when it’s safe.” Hua Mu sounded somewhat anxious after learning that Nie Tian had obtained two hexagrams. “It’s better that we leave tonight. Delaying means trouble!”

“Leave the Realm of Flame Heaven?”

Hua Mu nodded vigorously. “Exactly, I have to take you to a place out of the Heaven Palace Sect’s reach, where you’ll conceal your identity and spend some time to draw enlightenment from the first and middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation. When

you've gained thorough understandings of the profound mysteries within those two hexagrams, even if the Heaven Palace Sect somehow found you, they won't be able to forcibly take them away from you.

“At that time, they'll have to rely on you, whether they're willing to or not. They might even take you to the Heaven Palace Sect.

“Once you're in the Heaven Palace Sect, you won't have to worry about those people from the Realm of Dark Underworld any more. They won't dare to make a move, even if they know that the Flame Dragon Armor is in your possession.”

Hua Mu's words were very overwhelming to Nie Tian. Confused and disoriented, Nie Tian said, “I'll do what you think is the best.”

“Okay, let's go.”

# Chapter 224: Getting Away

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Deep into the night, in the Ghost Sect...

Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing were discussing their next move and how they were going to handle the potential threat from the other eight realms.

There were three inter-spatial teleportation portals in the Realm of Flame Heaven; each of them was established in the Hell Sect, the Ghost Sect, and the Spiritual Treasure Sect respectively.

The seven sects of the Realm of Flame Heaven had always traveled to the other eight realms in the Domain of the Falling Stars via those teleportation portals.

However, when the outsider army had invaded the Realm of Flame Heaven, all three of them had failed. When the seven sects wanted to send out signals for help through them, they discovered that all the other realms, including those they had close relations with, had denied their requests to teleport.

Originally, the seven sects had planned to teleport their young and weak away to the other realms first, and then use the portals to evacuate their powerful experts if the Realm of Flame Heaven's loss became inevitable.

However, it seemed that the other eight realms had already reached a mutual understanding; each and every one of them had declined the seven sects' requests to travel to their realms via the

inter-spatial teleportation portals.

It was at that moment that Chang Sen and the other sect leaders had realized that the other eight realms had abandoned the Realm of Flame Heaven.

Chang Sen's expression was very grim. "Now that the outsiders are gone, if there are no mishaps, those people from the Realm of Dark Underworld and the Realm of Earth Sieve will soon learn about it and descend upon us. From what I can tell, we don't have to worry that the outsiders will invade us again in the near future. Instead, those three inter-spatial teleportation portals have become my biggest concern, since the other realms might try to use them to get to our realm.

"In my opinion, we should seal all three of them as soon as possible.

"Even though the Realm of Dark Underworld and the Realm of Earth Sieve are relatively near us, if the portals are no longer available, they will have to spend a significant amount of time and effort traveling across the starry river to get to our realm.

"Furthermore, traveling in the starry river can be very dangerous.

"I want them to suffer great losses on their way, even if we can't stop them from coming to the Realm of Flame Heaven!"

After Chang Sen shared his views, both Ghost Eye and Li Jing nodded briefly in assent.

Immediately afterwards, Ghost Eye ordered an elder of the Ghost Sect to seal the inter-spatial teleportation portal in their sect.

Chang Sen also set out to use a secret magic to inform the guardians of the inter-spatial teleportation portal in the Hell Sect to turn it off, and also prepared to urge Fang Hui from the Spiritual Treasure Sect to do the same to theirs.

However, at that very moment, the elder Ghost Eye had just sent to seal the portal rushed back in. Urgency and fear could be seen on his face. “Sectmaster, by the time I got to the inter-spatial teleportation portal, two visitors from foreign realms had already arrived. They have the edict of the sectmaster of the Heaven Palace Sect with them, and they want to see you, Chang Sen.”

Ghost Eye’s expression suddenly flickered. “People from the Heaven Palace Sect? Edict of their sectmaster?”

Chang Sen and Li Jing were also taken back by the news.

Ghost Eye turned to look at Chang Sen.

Chang Sen remained silent for a while before nodding and saying, “Send them in. Let’s see what they have to say.”

Therefore, Ghost Eye beckoned for the elder to bring them in.

Moments later, the Ghost Sect elder brought Ning Yang and Su Lin to the meeting hall where the three sectmasters were.

After they came to a stop, Ning Yang bowed in a respectful yet proud fashion. “Greetings, seniors.”

Then, he took out the edict and passed it on to Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing. When the three of them examined it and were convinced that it was authentic, Ning Yang took his time to explain that he was here for Nie Tian, who had obtained the first and middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

After that, he went on to explain why they need them without holding anything back; how they would have to gather all three parts of the Fragmentary Star Incantation to reseal the spatial rifts that had appeared in the Realm of Mystic Heaven, the Realm of a Thousand Devastations, and the Realm of Flame Heaven, and only by doing that would they be able to stop the demon Qi from pouring into the three realms.

Everything Ning Yang said was news, even to Chang Sen. After learning about the significance of the Fragmentary Star Incantation and the outsiders’ true intentions, the three of them all had grim expressions on their faces.

“If we don’t seal the spatial rift in your realm as soon as possible, given the size of your realm, it’ll take no more than twenty years for the demon Qi to fill every corner of your homeland. By that time, the outsiders might not even need to launch a war to take the

Realm of Flame Heaven. The seven sects and all the commoners might have already taken the initiative to emigrate to another realm.

“The reason we’re here is to solve this problem for all of us. Nie Tian’s cultivation base is far too low. He can’t possibly make the best of those two parts of the incantation within such a short period of time.

“I hope you can look at the bigger picture and give him to us. I promise you that I’ll only take away his two fragmentary star marks, and I won’t endanger his life.

“Furthermore, as long as we get what we want, we’ll urge the other six realms to stay out of the conflicts between your realm and the Realm of Dark Underworld and the Realm of Earth Sieve.

“Seniors, I believe that you understand what it means to “give to get”, and what’s best for the Realm of Flame Heaven.”

After making his intentions and reasons clear, Ning Yang stood in silence, waiting for Chang Sen and the other two to make their decision.

Li Jing seemed both surprised and worried. “Nie Tian?! I can’t believe it’s Nie Tian! Never would have I expected that Nie Tian obtained two fragmentary star marks during the Heaven Gate trial!”

After pondering the matter for a while, Chang Sen made up his mind. “Li Jing, those fragmentary star marks are of great importance. Whether we can unite all three of them will determine the fate of our realms. I’ll never forget Nie Tian’s contribution to help defend the Realm of Flame Heaven.

“However, after all, he’s only at the Lesser Heaven stage; even if he gets to keep those two fragmentary star marks, he won’t be able to make the best use of them. The consequences will be catastrophic. Not only will the Realm of Flame Heaven face calamities, but the Realm of Mystic Heaven and the Realm of a Thousand Devastations will also suffer great turbulence.”

He turned to Li Jing and continued, “Tell him to give up the fragmentary star marks, and I’ll compensate him for his loss.”

Ghost Eye seemed somewhat anxious after learning what the huge pit that had suddenly appeared in the Realm of Flame Heaven meant.

He also knew that now that Ning Yang had come with his sectmaster’s edict, he wouldn’t take no for an answer.

After weighing the pros against the cons in his head, he found Ning Yang’s proposal acceptable. After all, by sacrificing Nie Tian’s two fragmentary star marks, they would protect the Realm of Flame Heaven from both outsider invaders and potential threats from the other two realms.

Meanwhile, Li Jing also understood that she wouldn’t be able to



save Nie Tian's fragmentary star marks, no matter how hard she might try.

She was very aware that now that the situation involved the will of the sectmaster of the Heaven Palace Sect, no one in the Realm of Flame Heaven would be able to turn it around.

Most importantly, if Nie Tian refused to do so, the Realm of Flame Heaven would be put in even greater danger.

Numerous expressions flashed across Li Jing's face. After pondering in silence for quite a while, she looked at Ning Yang and said, "Are you sure you won't hurt Nie Tian when you remove his fragmentary star marks?"

Ning Yang solemnly promised her that they had a way to peel away the fragmentary star marks without compromising Nie Tian's future cultivation.

He even promised that the Heaven Palace Sect would compensate him after receiving his fragmentary star marks and also pressure the Realm of Dark Underworld and the Realm of Earth Sieve to halt their operations against the Realm of Flame Heaven.

His words eventually erased Li Jing's concerns. She said, "Alright, I'll take you to him."

"I'd appreciate it if you did so now," said Ning Yang.

Then, Li Jing led him and a few others to Nie Tian's residence, where the Bone Blood Demon was lying in the courtyard.

However, before they even descended from midair, Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing's expressions flickered simultaneously.

None of their soul consciousnesses detected any sign of life in the residence, which meant that Nie Tian wasn't there.

"What's wrong?" Ning Yang was confused.

Li Jing's eyebrows furrowed slightly as she said, "He might have gone out. It's alright. I remember his aura. As long as he's still in the city, I'll be able to find him soon."

Upon saying these words, sitting on her Blood Lotus, she unleashed a wave of spiritual power from her spiritual sea, which rapidly spread out in every direction.

Several minutes later, she shuddered slightly and said, "He's not in the city!"

"How can that be?!" Chang Sen was also surprised. "That kid wouldn't leave for no reason. Can it be that he sensed danger? But considering his cultivation base, he couldn't get very far."

"Split up and search for him!" Ghost Eye immediately blurred into action. Like a ghost shadow, he flew up into the air and disappeared.

Right after him, Chang Sen and Li Jing also rose into the sky and flew away in the other direction.

By daybreak, the three of them had returned to the green stone city, frustrated expressions on their faces. Apparently, none of them had found Nie Tian.

# Chapter 225: The Tenth Realm in the Domain!

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At daybreak, a small boat could be seen traveling as fast as a flash in the boundless, misty sky.

The boat was five meters long and made from some unknown material.

Numerous spirit stones filled the bottom of the boat; every one of them was emanating bright light as they rapidly used up their spiritual power.

From time to time, Hua Mu would bring out more spirit stones from within his ring of holding and toss them to the bottom of the boat, as it seemed that he did so to fuel the flying boat.

The speed at which the boat traveled was about twice as fast as the Bone Blood Demon.

Standing next to Hua Mu, Nie Tian turned his head to look at the Lightning Shuttle with a measuring gaze, and marveled at it.

According to Hua Mu, this Lightning Shuttle was very valuable and rare. Even the Spiritual Treasure Sect didn't have the techniques and resources available to build one of them.

If a Qi warrior traveled in one of them, not only would they save

their strength, since it didn't require its owner to power it with their own power, but they could even practice cultivation or draw enlightenment from their spiritual incantations during the commute.

Normally, only powerful sects like the Heaven Palace Sect would possess valuable spiritual tools like this, and only their high-ranking officials would be allowed to use them.

Nie Tian was very surprised that Hua Mu had such a precious spiritual tool.

He had a feeling that Hua Mu was a very important person in the Domain of the Falling Stars, and that the name Hua Mu could be a fake name.

Just as Nie Tian was pondering the matter, Hua Mu frowned. He turned to look in the direction of the Ghost Sect and said, "All three of them have come searching for you."

"I didn't expect the Heaven Palace Sect to act so quickly. Fortunately, we left early enough. Otherwise, if Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, or Li Jing found us, it would give rise to a lot of trouble."

"I don't know who the Heaven Palace Sect has sent here. But whoever it is, if he or she learns about our whereabouts, you won't be safe anymore."

"Are they looking for you too?" Nie Tian asked; shock could be

heard in his voice.

Hua Mu shook his head. “No, I’m not who they’re looking for. They must be searching for you because of the pressure they received from the Heaven Palace Sect. I knew that the Heaven Palace Sect would come and collect them when you told me that you have two fragmentary star marks on you. I just didn’t expect them to come so soon. After all, the outsiders have just retreated.”

Through Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing’s actions, Hua Mu was able to suss out the Heaven Palace Sect’s deal with them.

“Those fragmentary star marks are really that important?” Nie Tian asked.

“Yes, they are.” Hua Mu pondered for a moment, and then explained to Nie Tian why they were. It was the same thing that Ning Yang had explained to Chang Sen, Ghost Eye, and Li Jing.

After learning that the hexagrams on his chest could determine the fate of the Realm of Flame Heaven and two other realms, Nie Tian’s expression flickered drastically.

Hua Mu seemed to have seen through his concerns and said consolingly, “You don’t need to worry too much. It will take at least twenty years for the demon Qi to fill the Realm of Flame Heaven. As for the Realm of a Thousand Devastations and the Realm of Mystic Heaven, since they are vaster, it will take about fifty years for the demon Qi to fill them.

“Meanwhile, according to my estimations, you’ll need only five to six years to study and fully grasp the profound truths within the first and middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

“At that time, the Heaven Palace Sect will no longer be able to forcibly take the fragmentary star marks away from you.

“Only then will they compromise and accept you into the Heaven Palace Sect, along with your fragmentary star marks.

“Although the Realm of Flame Heaven, the Realm of a Thousand Devastations, and the Realm of Mystic Heaven might have to fight the influence of the demon Qi in the coming five to six years, their foundations won’t be shaken.

“And that’s the way you’ll benefit the most.”

With these words, Hua Mu looked at Nie Tian and said with a solemn tone, “Nie Tian, now that you’ve chosen the path of cultivation, you’ll have to think more about your future. If you give up those fragmentary star marks, you’ll regret it for the rest of your life. You risked your life for them. Why would you hand them over to the Heaven Palace Sect?”

“If I can keep them and save the Realm of Flame Heaven at the same time, of course I’ll never give them up!” Nie Tian blurted.

A grin appeared on Hua Mu’s face as he said, “Good boy. Also, you can rest assured that your grandfather and aunt will be safe in

the Cloudsoaring Sect. They have Wu Ji to shelter them. I don't think the Heaven Palace sect will do anything to them. From now on, the Heaven Palace sect will leave no corner unchecked in their search for you, but I'll make sure they don't find you.

“In five to six years, when you've mastered everything in the fragmentary star marks and you can put your knowledge to use, then you can return to the Realm of Flame Heaven, open and square. Or you can go directly to the Realm of Mystic Heaven.

“By that time, not only will they not hurt you, but they might even provide you with cultivation resources and rely on you to save their realm.”

Nie Tian nodded and said, “I trust that you are doing this for my benefit, right?”

“Of course, why would I trick you?” Hua Mu patted on his shoulder. “If I wanted to hurt you, you would have died already. The Flame Dragon Armor alone was already reason enough for some people to kill you. If you did give up your fragmentary star marks this time, and only relied on Wu Ji and Li Jing to protect you, I doubt that they'd be able to stop that person from the Realm of Dark Underworld.”

“Who are you talking about?” Nie Tian asked with a grim face.

“There are two major Qi warrior sects in the Realm of Dark Underworld, the Flame God Sect and the Spirit God Sect. Lai Yi and Tang Yang are both from the Flame God Sect. The Flame



Dragon Armor's former owner is the sectmaster of the Flame God Sect, who everyone refers to as Flame God, but he didn't have the Blood Core. Therefore the Flame Dragon Armor wasn't complete. He had gone to great lengths just to get the Flame Dragon Armor without the Blood Core. Would he really let you have it after learning that the Flame Dragon Armor had merged with the Blood Core?

“He might even have personally come to the Realm of Flame Heaven to search for you, along with people from the Heaven Palace Sect. Would you still want to stay in the Realm of Flame Heaven then?”

“Okay, I see.”

As the two of them spoke, the Lightning Shuttle carried them as it whistled through the misty sky and flew further and further away from the Ghost Sect.

One day passed...

It was dusk when the Lightning Shuttle flew past the Mystic Mist Sect and appeared over a boundless ocean that was covered in faint, white mist.

Numerous islands were scattered everywhere like the stars in the sky. Most of them were uninhabited, with only a handful inhabited by fishermen.

The Lightning Shuttle flew for a while longer before it slowed down above an insignificant isle, which was oval and only the size of Black Cloud City.

A small mountain took up almost the entire isle.

When the Lightning Shuttle slowly flew to a position halfway up the mountain, Hua Mu reached out with one hand, and a spiritual light flashed across in front of him. A stone as smooth as jade suddenly split open, and a cave appeared.

Hua Mu grabbed Nie Tian's hand as they jumped off of the Lightning Shuttle and landed at the mouth of the stone cave. After storing the Lightning Shuttle back into his ring of holding, Hua Mu led Nie Tian into the cave.

It was a wide stone cave, where numerous luminous pearls were embedded in the cave walls, lighting the cave as if it were under broad daylight.

As they walked deeper, a small teleportation portal appeared in front of them.

Hua Mu stopped and said, "The place we are going to is quite turbulent. Actually, it was the tenth realm of the Domain of the Falling Stars. It's just that it's been abandoned by Qi warriors from the other nine realms for some reason, and now it's completely unsuitable for Qi warriors to practice cultivation in.

“However, it’s become a place where Qi warriors who aren’t welcome in the other nine realms gather. Among them are fugitives from the other realms who have committed serious crimes, and those who practice cultivation via dangerous, forbidden techniques.

“I’ll take you there, but I won’t be able to stay for long. You’ll need to depend on yourself to make a living over there.

“However, I have faith in you. You’ve survived worse.”

Nie Tian went blank for a moment. “The tenth realm of the Domain of the Falling Stars?”

“Exactly, the Realm of a Hundred Battles is the realm that’s the closest to it, but the distance between them is still extremely far.” With an embarrassed smile on his face, Hua Mu continued, “That’s the only place that the Heaven Palace Sect can hardly get to and doesn’t have any influence in. As long as you are careful and keep your secrets to yourself, they won’t be able to find you.

“One more thing, don’t trust anyone who lives there.”

To Hua Mu’s surprise, Nie Tian nodded and said, “Great! If that’s that case, I’m quite intrigued.”

“...I guess it’s perfect for you then.” Hua Mu pointed towards the small teleportation portal and beckoned for Nie Tian to step inside of it.

As soon as they both entered the portal, Hua Mu cast a spell to start it.

In a few seconds, the two of them were engulfed by a dazzlingly bright light, and by the time the light dimmed, they were already nowhere to be found.

# Chapter 226: Shatter City

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In the Realm of Split Void...

In the center of Shatter City, numerous human Qi warriors were gathered by the side of large inter-spatial teleportation portal.

Every once in awhile, the portal would emanate bright light, and human figures would gradually became clear in its center, after which a black-garbed Qi warriors would walk up to them and demand spirit stones.

The amount of the spirit stones would depend on the distance of the teleportation, but the deal was that everyone needed to pay in spirit stones to use the portal, whoever it was.

Other than that, those who came to Shatter City for the first time would need to get a identity medallion, within which the time that they were allowed to stay in the city was marked.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

The portal began to shine with misty, bright light. When the dazzling light faded away, Nie Tian and Hua Mu slowly walked out of the portal.

At that moment, a Qi warrior in black garb rapidly approached them.

“Three hundred spirit stones,” The person said indifferently.

Hua Mu nodded, not saying a word. Then he took out three hundred spirit stones from his ring of holding and handed them over to the person.

Nie Tian secretly used his psychic awareness to wrap a bit of the light of the fragmentary stars in his soul, and then used this Heaven Eye to pry into the person’s cultivation base. As it turned out, he was at the early Greater Heaven stage.

A bloody-red skull was embroidered on the man’s chest, which seemed to serve as a sigil of his identity.

Nie Tian glanced around and found that every black-robed Qi warrior around him had the same skull pattern on their chest. Apparently, they were from the same force.

The man stared coldly at Nie Tian. “This one doesn’t have an identity medallion.”

Just as Hua Mu was about to say something, a Qi warrior suddenly rushed into the teleportation portal, which was now lit up again and already had three people standing inside.

Those three seemed to have paid in full to leave the place, but the one of them didn’t.

Before he could even get a firm foothold on the portal, a burly,

black-robed man stepped over, grabbed his head with one hand, and dragged him out of it. It seemed as if he was picking up a chicken.

“Your identity medallion has expired,” The burly man said with an indifferent expression on his face. “You can either extend your stay with more spirit stones, or pay for the teleportation service with spirit stones so you can leave.”

“I don’t have any spirit stones. Please, let me leave.” The poor man pleaded.

“Alright. Since you don’t have any spirit stones, I’ll have to let you leave Shatter City.” The black-robed man grabbed the poor man and picked him up from the ground as numerous threads of lightning shot out of his sturdy hand. Like chains, they wrapped the poor man so tightly that he couldn’t even struggle any more.

“No! I don’t want to leave the city! I want to use the portal to leave the Realm of Split Void! Please!” The poor man begged and cried.

The black-robed man grinned sinisterly. “Do you think we Blood Skulls will let people use the portal for free? Since you dared to come here, you should know the rules. If you don’t have any spirit stones, you’ll rot out there.”

With these words, the black-robed man dragged the person towards the gate of Shatter City, completely deaf to his screams.

From the way he screamed, Nie Tian realized that being kicked out of the city meant nothing but death.

Nie Tian turned to Hua Mu and asked, “What’s outside of Shatter City?”

Hua Mu pointed up. Nie Tian looked up and found that the entire city was enveloped by an enormous light shield, which seemed to be shimmering with faint spiritual power.

“There are two upsides to staying inside of Shatter City; first of all, you won’t need to continuously spend spiritual power to resist the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth. Second of all, fighting is prohibited in Shatter City. Whoever has paid for their stay will be given an identity medallion and receive protection from the Blood Skulls while they are in the city.

“However, once they are out of the city, the Blood Skulls will protect no one. They can kill and loot all they want.

“A bunch of extremely violent and vicious people always lurk outside of Shatter City, waiting for people to walk through the city gate. If they think they can take the person, they will instantly jump on him and kill him.”

As he explained this to Nie Tian, Hua Mu handed a few spirit stones to another black-robed man to apply for an identity medallion for Nie Tian.



After receiving a triangular identity medallion from the Blood Skull member, Hua Mu shoved it into Nie Tian's hands. "Here. This identity medallion is yours now. You can infuse it with a wisp of your psychic awareness."

Nie Tian did as he was bid and sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into the identity medallion, where he saw an exquisite spell formation with ninety light dots floating inside it.

The moment his psychic awareness flew into the spell formation, it was seized by an unknown force.

Then, he found that one of the ninety light dots had already started to shimmer, as if it were spending power to keep the wisp of his psychic awareness within the spell formation.

"Those ninety light dots represent the time you've bought in Shatter City." Hua Mu explained. "For every day that passes, one light dot will die out. In ninety days, all the light dots will vanish, and the wisp of your psychic awareness will dissipate with them."

"That will mean that your allowed time is up."

"If you wish to continue to stay in Shatter City, you'll have to pay spirit stones to get more time from the Blood Skulls."

"One spirit stone for one day."

"Of course, if you want to use the inter-spatial teleportation"

portal to leave the Realm of Split Void, you'll have to prepare more spirit stones."

As they spoke, Hua Mu led Nie Tian away from the portal.

"The psychic awareness in every identity medallion is unique. So even if you kill someone, you won't be able to take away their time and add it to yours.

"Plus, as soon as the owner of the identity medallion is dead, the psychic awareness in the identity medallion will vanish, and the light dots along with it.

"The reason why the Blood Skulls are doing this is because they can get more spirit stones this way."

"Ninety light dots stand for ninety days," Nie Tian muttered to himself. "That means I have three months."

"Exactly. You have three months in your identity medallion." Hua Mu looked at him with an measuring gaze and asked, "How many spirit stones do you have in your bracelet of holding?"

After a brief examination, Nie Tian replied, "A little more than three hundred."

Those spirit stones were either bestowed upon him by Wu Ji or looted from foreign cultivators during the Heaven Gate trial.

When he had parted with Li Fan, he had given him the majority of the spirit stones and cultivation materials he had looted during the Heaven Gate trial for him to take back to the Cloudsoaring Sect as payback.

After all, he had learned that, at that time, the Cloudsoaring Sect had been under siege, and Li Jing would never let him return to the Cloudsoaring Sect. That was the only way he could make his contribution.

As of now, he only had three hundred spirit stones, a handful of Blood Pills, a few Flame Crystals, and the Flame Dragon Armor in his bracelet of holding.

If he had known that he would have to leave the Realm of Flame Heaven and come to a place where he could only buy his stay with spirit stones, he would have never been so generous.

“A little more than three hundred?” Hua Mu rubbed his chin and pondered for a while before taking out three translucent stones. He handed them to Nie Tian and said, “These are spirit jades. Each one of them is worth one hundred spirit stones in the other realms. However, in Shatter City, the Blood Skulls will only give you ninety spirit stones for one of them.”

Nie Tian rubbed them with his hands and sensed that the spiritual energy they contained was indeed a hundred times richer than spirit stones.

Hua Mu noticed his wonder, and thus explained to him, “Spirit stones, spirit jades, and spirit crystals are the main currency that we Qi warriors use. Spirit stones usually exist close to the surface; spirit jades can be found in deeper parts, while spirit crystals can only be mined from the heart of the earth.

“One spirit crystal is worth a hundred spirit jades, and one spirit jade is worth a hundred spirit stones.”

As they continued to walk, Hua Mu explained the value and nature of the three major types of materials that contained spiritual energy to Nie Tian in detail.

“Those spirit jades are for you to break through into the Heaven stage. Don’t use them on anything else unless you have to.

“You’ve probably noticed yourself that the light shield can only stop the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth from entering the city, but it can’t purge it and turn it into usable spiritual Qi.

“So you’ll have to use spirit stones in your future cultivation.

“You’ll need copious amounts of spiritual energy when you make the breakthrough. I reckon three spirit jades will be enough.

“You can use your spirit stones to practice cultivation. But the amount you have is far from enough. You need to come up with ways to earn more, because only in that way will you last in Shatter City.

“From now on, you won’t have a clan or a sect to rely on, and you’ll have to make your own living. This is also part of the reason I brought you here.”

They talked and walked before coming to a stop in front of a sizable residence, and then Hua Mu said, “We’re here. This is the place I’ve arranged for you to work in.”

## Chapter 227: Pei Qiqi

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Thump! Thump! Thump! Hua Mu knocked gently on the wooden gate under dim moonlight.

A short while later, the gate opened, and a teenage girl in a long, ocean-blue dress and a ponytail appeared.

The moment Nie Tian saw the girl, he felt as if the entire Shatter City had been lit up.

He had never seen a face so beautiful. Her beauty overshadowed every girl he had ever seen, including Jiang Lingzhu, An Shiyi, and Su Lin.

The girl's eyes were as pure as crystal, and not even the least impurity could be found within them. It was as if she could make any man alive fall for her with one glance.

Nie Tian was deeply captivated by her eyes; as a matter of fact, since the moment he saw her, his gaze never moved away from them, as if they had captured his soul and were pulling it away from him.

“Long time no see, Mr. Hua.” The girl sounded neither warm nor cold.

Only then did Nie Tian suddenly snap out of his daze and realize that he had been staring at her the whole time.

He immediately averted his gaze from her, fearing that he would lose Hua Mu's face and the girl would think less of him.

Hua Mu had long since taken note of Nie Tian's reactions. He chuckled and patted his shoulder, saying, "No need to feel embarrassed. Everyone who sees her for the first time reacts the exact same way as you did."

Before Nie Tian could explain, Hua Mu turned to the girl and introduced, "This is my nephew, Hua Tian. This is his first time in the Realm of Split Void. He wants to temper himself, so I plan to leave him here with you and your master for a while. Also, since he knows nothing of this realm, I hope you can help enlighten him.

"You can throw any chore his way and pay him accordingly. No need to give me face and overpay him.

"I see." Pei Qiqi looked Nie Tian up and down with a measuring gaze before saying with a frown, "His cultivation base is quite low. Does he know anything about equipment forging?"

"No, he doesn't," Hua Mu answered on Nie Tian's behalf.

"If that's the case, he won't get paid very well." Pei Qiqi's tone was indifferent, and she didn't take Nie Tian's ego into consideration, even though she knew that Nie Tian was Hua Mu's nephew.

Nie Tian, who had just recovered a clear mind, heard her words and realized that she didn't have a high opinion of him, but he didn't utter a word.

"It's alright. I'm no stranger to your master's rules." Then, Hua Mu smiled as he turned to Nie Tian and said, "This is Pei Qiqi. You'll listen to her from now on. If you want to earn spirit stones, then you'll need to prove yourself worthy. Qiqi won't treat you better just because you're my nephew."

"I understand," Nie Tian replied, nodding.

"Okay, this is it. I still have some urgent matters to tend to. Please excuse me." Hua Mu turned around and prepared to leave.

"Mister Hua," Pei Qiqi called out softly.

Hua Mu turned back and, looking at her confused face, he asked, "Yes?"

"Now that you're here, don't you want to meet my master?" Pei Qiqi asked. "After all, it's been a long time since you were here, and it's hard to say when you'll get the chance to meet again."

A hint of panic appeared in Hua Mu's eyes as he shook his head and said, "Maybe next time. I'm really in a hurry."

With these words, he rapidly walked away without looking back, as if he were afraid that the longer he stayed, the less he would



have the heart to leave.

Watching Hua Mu leave hastily, Nie Tian wondered that it might be the first time that he had seen Hua Mu so flustered.

Watching Hua Mu leave, Pei Qiqi sighed, as if she were pitying something.

Nie Tian discovered that her mind seemed to have drifted away, so he quietly formed a Heaven Eye with the power from the fragmentary stars in his soul and used it to examine her cultivation base.

However, when he did, he found that he couldn't sense a single thing, as if she were in another dimension, even though she was standing right in front of his eyes.

Nie Tian had never had such strange feelings before.

Ever since he had learned how to form the Heaven Eyes and use them to examine another's cultivation base, he had only failed once, which was when he had used it on the outsider commander Caro. Caro had glanced at his approaching Heaven Eye, and it had immediately exploded.

Other than that, he had never failed, but Pei Qiqi was an exception. He believed that, considering her age, she couldn't have reached Caro's cultivation stage.

The reason he sensed a special anomaly on her must be because she was not ordinary.

“What are you doing?” Pei Qiqi seemed to have sensed the anomaly. She let out a cold harrumph and said with an unpleasant tone, “You’re quite daring for someone with such a low cultivation base!”

Nie Tian smiled embarrassedly. “Well... Sorry. It’s my habit.”

It seemed that he had yet to recover his ability to have proper conversations with a girl so beautiful.

“Your habit?” Pei Qiqi put on a long face as she turned around and stepped into the courtyard. “Follow me.”

Nie Tian did as he was bid.

“Senior Martial Sister Pei.” As soon as she entered the courtyard, a short, fat young man that looked like a barrel approached her and asked, smiling, “Who was that? And who’s this?”

“His name is Hua Tian, Mr. Hua’s nephew. He’ll stay with us for some time. It was Mr. Hua that I talked to just now.” It seemed that Pei Qiqi felt relieved that she could dump Nie Tian on the fat young man. “You’ll be responsible for him from now on. This is his first time in the Realm of Split Void. You’ll tell him about this realm and find him something to do first thing tomorrow.”

“No problem. Hua Tian, is it? You’ll report to me from now on.” The fat young man said casually.

Nie Tian was at a loss for words.

Hua Mu had assigned him to Pei Qiqi just now, and Pei Qiqi had promised Hua Mu to take care of him.

He had never expected that so soon after Hua Mu left, Pei Qiqi would assign him to this fat boy. He wasn’t sure whether it was because he had offended her by examining her with his Heaven Eye or that she just attached no importance to him.

“What are you waiting for? Let’s go. What? Are you upset that you can’t work under Senior Martial Sister Pei?” The fat young man twitched his mouth and said with an unpleasant tone, “Forget about it. Senior Martial Sister Pei doesn’t take those who come here because of their relationship with my master. You should consider yourself lucky now that I’m willing to take you with me.”

He grabbed Nie Tian by his hand and forcibly dragged him away from Pei Qiqi.

After the two of them were gone, Pei Qiqi frowned and muttered to herself, “Mr. Hua has always lived by himself. How come he’s all of a sudden shown up with this nephew? Another strange thing is that when that guy used his psychic awareness to examine me, my spatial field suddenly began to operate by itself.”

## Chapter 228: The Realm of Split Void

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The fat young man's name was Li Ye. He showed Nie Tian to a remote stone room and took out an earthen jar of hard liquor from his ring of holding.

He drank in large gulps as he explained the situation in the Realm of Split Void to Nie Tian. It wasn't long before his cheeks turned red and he seemed rather drunk.

Even still, he talked consistently, and everything he said made good sense to Nie Tian.

While listening to him, Nie Tian secretly used his Heaven Eye to examine Li Zhi's cultivation base.

"He's in the late Heaven stage and his cultivation attribute is fire!" Nie Tian was taken aback.

From what he could tell, Li Ye was roughly his age. Although he hadn't progressed very fast when he had been in the Nie clan, his cultivation had advanced by leaps and bounds ever since he had learned the secrets of the Blood Core and participated in the Green Illusion dimension trial.

As of now, he was already at the late Lesser Heaven stage, higher than Yu Tong, Jiang Lingzhu, and his other peers from the seven sects.

He was even as strong as the top young disciples from the Hell Sect, if not stronger.

He had thought that reaching the late Lesser Heaven stage at his age was already a great achievement.

Never had he imagined that Li Ye, who was just around his age and had been cultivating in such a poor environment, would be at the late Heaven stage.

“Ring of holding!” Then, he soon came to notice that Li Ye was wearing a ring of holding instead of a bracelet of holding, which was cheaper and more common.

Ever since he had attended the Treasure Convention in the Spiritual Treasure Sect, he had learned that the value of a ring of holding would go far beyond a bracelet of holding.

Since a ring of holding was smaller in size than a bracelet of holding, yet its storage room was larger, the process of forging a ring of holding was much more difficult.

This made their price several times or even more than ten times higher than a bracelet of holding.

That was also why only young disciples like Jiang Lingzhu and Yu Tong, who were the core disciples of their sects in the Realm of Flame Heaven, were qualified to use a ring of holding.

Normally, only cultivators at the Worldly realm or higher would have accumulated a large enough fortune to purchase one of them.

The fact that Li Ye possessed such a valuable ring of holding even though he was quite young made Nie Tian increasingly curious.

As more liquor went down Li Ye's throat, he became increasingly animated while he went on about the situation in the Realm of Split Void. Two hours later, he rose to his feet and staggered toward the door, saying, "Have a good sleep. I'll come for you in the morning." With these words, he stepped through the door while taking another jar of liquor from his ring of holding and starting to gulp it down.

Watching Li Ye wobbling away, Nie Tian frowned in silence, sorting through the information that Li Ye had poured onto him.

According to Li Ye, once upon a time, the Realm of Split Void used to be a very powerful realm in the Domain of the Falling Stars, even stronger than the current Realm of Mystic Heaven.

There was a special place in the Realm of Split Void, the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

It was in the central area of the Realm of Split Void. Its vast land area, copious spiritual and material resources, and rich spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth had once made it very popular among Qi warriors.

However, none of these made the Void Illusion Mountain Range unique.

What had made it known throughout the Domain of the Falling Stars was that there was a huge space disruption zone in the mountain range.

The space disruption zone was very unstable. Every once in awhile, numerous spatial rifts that led to unknown dimensions would appear within it, however they would constantly shift their positions throughout the mountain range. They never remained in one position for more than one day.

Some of them led to realms ruled by powerful outsiders, while others led to completely unexplored heavens and earths; on many occasions, they led to lands where danger lurked at every corner.

The Void Illusion Mountain Range attracted powerful experts from all over the Domain of the Falling Stars to come and explore. One after another, they went through those spatial rifts to unknown dimensions, but not every one of them returned.

Only a handful of them returned after successfully discovering brand-new dimensions and then extending their sects' influence to them, resulting in their obtaining cultivating resources richer than they had imagined.

According to him, most of the dimensions affiliated with the nine realms of the Domain of the Falling Stars had been initially discovered through the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Afterwards,

they had set up teleportation portals to facilitate travel between their own sects and the dimensions they found.

For example, the Green Illusion dimension had been discovered by a powerful expert from the Spiritual Treasure Sect who had gone through one of the spatial rifts in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

The uniqueness of the Void Illusion Mountain Range made the Realm of Split Void the most popular realm in the Domain of the Falling Stars. An unending stream of powerful experts poured into the mountain range to try out their luck.

As the result, one of the most powerful Qi warrior sects in that era took root and flourished in the Realm of Split Void: the Void Palace Sect.

The Void Palace Sect had been considered as powerful as the Heaven Palace Sect in the Realm of Mystic Heaven. It even once overshadowed the Heaven Palace sect during its prime.

Through the spatial rifts in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, the Void Palace Sect discovered quite a few unexplored realms where they had looted countless cultivation resources, making them richer than any other sect in the Domain of the Falling Stars.

As the Void Palace Sect thrived, numerous talented youngsters from throughout the domain flooded in, hoping to join the sect; plenty of foreign, renowned experts also came knocking on their door and expressed their willingness to be nothing more than a



guest elder.

However, just as they were in the middle of their prime, their powerful Qi warriors discovered a dimension where the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth was far richer, and the landmass was far vaster than the Realm of Split Void.

It wasn't long before they decided to send out all their best Qi warriors to explore that new dimension.

Without any delay, their most powerful experts set out for the foreign dimension one after another, the place where unexplored spirit mines were supposed to be everywhere.

However, none of them ever returned. No one knew what had happened to them.

The mysterious spatial rift in the Void Illusion Mountain Range that led to that dimension also soon disappeared.

The Void Palace sect's overnight collapse put the Realm of Split Void in utter chaos that lasted for decades. Until one day, when numerous sizable spatial rifts suddenly opened up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and began to leak tainted spiritual Qi that was poisonous to human Qi warriors.

With one whiff of it, common people would lose their mind and go mad.

As more of the poisonous Qi poured into the Realm of Split Void, a significant amount of mortal residents died, along with numerous plants and spirit beasts.

As time passed, even powerful Qi warriors began to find the environment of the Realm of Split Void hard to endure, and thus evacuated.

It wasn't long before only three settlements remained in the realm: Shatter City, the Land of the Abandoned, and Ash City.

All three of them relied on grand spell formations that were powered by massive amounts of spirit stones to keep the poisonous Qi out.

Once Qi warriors left these places and exposed themselves to the tainted spiritual Qi, they would have to spend great effort to resist its erosion.

Therefore, few powerful experts were willing to risk their lives to explore the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and even fewer returned with valuable findings.

Nine out of ten who were willing to try their fortune in the Void Illusion Mountain Range never returned, and among those who somehow made it back alive, the majority returned empty-handed.

Only a handful were able to bring back valuable information or resources.

The decline of the Void Palace Sect and the harsh environment of the Realm of Split Void made the once-prosperous Realm of Split Void rapidly hit rock bottom.

Since it was no longer fit for Qi warriors to live and cultivate in, it was soon abandoned by the other nine realms, and its name was removed from the Domain of the Falling Stars.

After that, the current Realm of Split Void became the place where Qi warriors who were driven out of their own realm gathered.

Some of them had committed serious crimes in their own realms and were wanted everywhere, which made the Realm of Split Void the only place they could stay off the radar and start a new life, if they were lucky.

Others were kicked out their sects and realms because they cultivated spiritual incantations and secret magics that were extremely evil or dangerous. By coming to the Realm of Split Void, they were able to continue with their experiments.

Those were the kinds of people who took shelter in Shatter City, the Land of the Abandoned, and Ash City.

In those settlements, three forces gradually came to power: the Blood Skull, the Wild Fire, and the Dark Moon.

The Blood Skull took Shatter City, the Wild Fire controlled Ash City, and the Dark Moon seized the Land of the Abandoned.

Technically, none of those forces were Qi warrior sects, but rather companies of powerful outlaws. Perhaps that was why their names seemed rather casual.

None of them would take in youngsters with low cultivation bases and temper them.

Instead, they would only take in members who were already strong.

The three forces' main duty was to keep order in Shatter City, the Land of the Abandoned, and Ash City. As long as no riots broke out, they would have a consistent spirit stone income.

From time to time, they would also go on missions to root out dangerous bandits who wandered in the wasteland outside the settlements.

Meanwhile, conflicts between the three forces also broke out occasionally. Whenever that happened, their members would always spare no effort to fight.

After all, as long as their own side stood victorious in the end, they could continue to live in their territory without paying anything, and the contributions they made on battlefield would also be rewarded with cultivation materials, such as spirit stones,

medicinal pills, and spiritual tools.

Sometimes, they would even arrange for fearless members to enter the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Those who volunteered to go would also be given handsome rewards.

Whenever they discovered a new dimension, they would either explore it themselves, or set up portals and sell them to powerful Qi warrior sects from the other nine realms, obtaining substantial fortunes in return.

Of course, it had become extremely difficult for people to discover new dimensions ever since the great upheaval in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Very few people could return alive, and even if they did, they would come back empty-handed and covered in wounds.

“The Realm of Split Void, the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and the once-most powerful Void Palace Sect.” Nie Tian muttered to himself as he pondered everything Li Ye had told him about this tenth realm of the Domain of the Falling Stars. For some unknown reason, he grew increasingly fascinated with it.

# Chapter 229: Torture

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Having sorted through the information about the Realm of Split Void that Li Ye had given him, Nie Tian went on to start cultivating without any delay.

The night passed...

At daybreak, Nie Tian sat in his room, wordless and cross-legged, holding two shattered spirit stones in his hands.

Having cultivated for only half a night, he had consumed two spirit stones.

In order to make another breakthrough in his cultivation base, he would have to spend a long time expanding his spiritual sea again.

During this process, he would need to allow new spiritual energy into his spiritual sea and refine it round after round.

Only when he had accumulated enough refined spiritual energy in his spiritual sea, and he had received the proper enlightenment, would he have a chance to make a breakthrough.

After all, aside from the three vortexes of spiritual power, there was still a vortex of flame power, a vortex of starlight, and vortex of wood power within his spiritual sea.

He would have to channel spiritual power with the relevant attributes to cultivate those three vortexes.

He had a feeling that since he had cultivated spiritual incantations of three different attributes, he would have to refine those vortexes and receive relevant enlightenment with all of them in order to break through into the next stage.

This meant that, for him to make every breakthrough, he would have to spend three times as much time and effort.

Given that there wasn't the least bit of spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in Shatter City, he could only practice cultivation with his spirit stones. Considering that he had spent two spirit stones after cultivating for half a night, he might need eight spirit stones for one whole day if he cultivated all day long.

However, he only had three hundred spirit stones in his bracelet of holding, which were only enough to get him through a month or so if he cultivated like that.

Furthermore, he only had three months on his identity medallion, and when that time was up, he would be forced to pay the Blood Skulls with spirit stones to extend his stay.

"The spirit stones I have are far from enough." Nie Tian started to grow worried.

"You're awake." Instead of knocking, Li Ye walked straight into

Nie Tian's stone room. After taking a few greenish-black logs out of his ring of holding and placing them on the ground, he turned to Nie Tian and said, smiling, "You'll start working for me from today on, and I'll reward you accordingly with spirit stones."

Nie Tian's eyes lit up and he asked with an elated tone, "How?"

"It's very simple."

Li Ye took out a dagger and demonstrated by cutting one greenish-black log into square slices.

Then he turned to Nie Tian and said, "This is Blackbound Wood, a third level Medium grade spiritual material. It can be used to build spell formations. Slice these logs into squares the way I did and I'll give you one spirit stone in return."

"As long as you do it the way I showed you, you should be able to make 150 slices out of these logs. If you can't make 150 slices out of them, then you must have wasted my materials, and you won't get paid!"

"One more thing, this dagger is only for you to use. I'll need it back when you're finished."

With these words, Li Ye tossed the dagger to Nie Tian and beckoned for him to work.

The moment Nie Tian grabbed the dagger, he sensed that the



dagger was exceptionally heavy and continuously emanated a strong coldness.

He immediately realized that the dagger must be beyond ordinary.

He took a Blackbound Wood log and, assuming a firm grip on the dagger, started cutting the way Li Ye had showed him.

At first, he pressed the dagger down with fifty percent of his strength. The wood only slightly cracked open but didn't break.

“Wow!”

Surprised, Nie Tian exclaimed softly and started to push harder. Only when he put in all of his strength did he finally slice a piece of wood from the log.

“This Blackbound Wood is very hard, even harder than most rocks.” After cutting one slice off, Nie Tian marveled at its hardness, and then he trimmed the edge according to the example Li Ye had set for him.

He used almost half an hour to finish his first slice under Li Ye's gaze.

During the whole process, Li Ye simply looked on and didn't say a thing.

Only when he saw Nie Tian get the first slice done did he say, “You’re quite strong physically for a person at your level.”

“How do you know?” Nie Tian looked up at him.

“Nothing.” Li Ye rubbed his nose and muttered, “Normally, considering your cultivation base, you should need to summon your spiritual power to cut a Blackbound Wood log. Only by infusing the dagger with their spiritual power, will a person at the Lesser Heaven stage be able to sever a log that tough. However, you managed to sever it with your psychical strength. That’s quite impressive.”

“Oh, that’s how it is.” Nie Tian smiled and said, “I guess I’m a bit stronger physically than people my age.

“And it’s always been like that.” Li Ye twitched his mouth and said, “I’ll leave you to it now, and I’ll come back before nightfall to check on your progress.”

“Alright.” Nie Tian nodded.

After Li Ye left, Nie Tian, who was very eager to earn more spirit stones, concentrated on cutting the Blackbound Wood.

An unknown period of time passed, and he finished turning one log into a dozen delicate square slices.

All of a sudden, his belly started growling, and that was when he realized that it was already almost sundown. Without any hesitation, he took out some dried spirit beast meat from his bracelet of holding and started munching.

While wolfing the meat down his throat, a sense of frustration rose in his heart as he realized that he had spent most of the day to finish a dozen pieces.

After rushing through his meal, he immediately went back to wood-cutting.

At sundown, Li Ye came back as expected and, with a glance of the work Nie Tian had done, he said, “I count twenty pieces. Like I said, one spirit stone for one hundred pieces. You’d better speed it up.”

Then he put the twenty wood slices away and swaggered out of Nie Tian’s room.

Frustration filled Nie Tian’s face.

He didn’t practice cultivation or sleep that night. Instead, he spent the whole night cutting wood.

Two days later, Nie Tian finally finished the 150 slices, and thus he went up to Li Ye and and traded them for one spirit stone.

“You can’t do it this way.” Li Ye said, sounding rather drunk,

“You’re too slow, and I don’t recommend you to put your cultivation on hold to earn spirit stones. If I were you, I’d work during the day and find time to practice cultivation during the night.”

“But if I do that, I’ll spend spirit stones way faster than I earn them from you,” Nie Tian said angrily.

“Sorry, I can’t help you with that.” Li Ye laughed and said, “You can only blame yourself for not having any equipment forging skills. This is what people get for doing simple work like this.” With those words, he walked away, seemingly quite content.

Nie Tian assumed that he was intentionally giving him a hard time to show him who was boss, so he paced himself with his work. In the following two weeks, he cut wood during the day and cultivated with spirit stones during the night.

In return, he received five spirit stones from Li Ye.

However, he had used about a hundred spirit stones during his cultivation, reducing the number of spirit stones in his bracelet of holding to about two hundred.

He had made several attempts during the night to use the Fragmentary Star Incantation to channel starlight into his spiritual sea.

However, although he could see numerous shining stars through

the light shield that enveloped Shatter City, none of the starlight could penetrate the light shield and infuse into his vortex of starlight. For that reason, he had to suspend his refinement of starlight.

On the other hand, due to his spirit stone shortage, he was forced to use the few Flame Crystals in his possession to cultivate the Flame Spirit Incantation, so as to enrich the flame power in his vortex of flame power.

During this period of time, he barely left his room, not to mention saw Pei Qiqi again.

One day, Li Ye walked into Nie Tian's room. He counted and put away a hundred wood slices and tossed a spirit stone to Nie Tian, saying, "I bet you're not happy about the spirit stones you get doing this, right?"

"Yeah." Nie Tian said.

"Do you want to earn more?" Li Ye asked, his eyes shining with bright light.

Greatly intrigued, Nie Tian asked, "What do I have to do?"

"I see that you're quite down-to-earth, so I'll give you an opportunity. As long as you do as I say, I promise you that you'll get more spirit stones in a day than what you get doing what you do for two weeks." Li Ye's words sounded very appealing.

“I’m all ears.” Nie Tian said.

“Since you’re quite strong physically, I can use your help to get some stuff out of the Void Illusion Mountain Range.” Li Ye said.

“Leave Shatter City and enter the Void Illusion Mountain Range?” Nie Tian’s expression flickered.

“Don’t worry. We won’t be walking there. We’ll teleport to the Void Illusion Mountain Range via the teleportation portal in the city square. That way we won’t have to deal with the bandits who wander outside the city.” Li Ye chuckled and continued, “Senior Martial Sister Pei is coming too. It was her who set up a small teleportation portal in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, through which we can travel back and forth between Shatter City and the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“I’m in!”

# Chapter 230: The Void Illusion Mountain Range

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First thing in the morning, Li Ye came to Nie Tian's room and took him to the courtyard.

A short while later, Pei Qiqi arrived in a long, ocean-blue dress.

Seeing her again after two weeks, Nie Tian's eyes lit up as he was once again captivated by her stunning beauty.

He even had to draw power from the seven fragmentary stars in his soul to calm his pounding heart.

“Hua Tian?” Pei Qiqi walked closer in a graceful fashion. After a glance at Nie Tian, she turned to Li Ye and asked, “What's he doing here?”

“Senior Martial Sister, I have discovered that although his cultivation base is low, his physical strength is rather impressive,” Li Ye hastily explained. “He can sever a Blackbound Wood log without using his spiritual power. As you know, the place we're going to is very special. The more we use our spiritual power, the more fluctuations we'll trigger.”

“If we bring him with us, he can help us carry more stuff back without putting us in danger.”

Pei Qiqi hesitated for a moment before saying, “His cultivation base is way too low. I’m afraid that he won’t be able to resist the tainted spiritual Qi, and it will corrupt his mind before we even get to our destination. We’re going on a mission. I don’t want to take a burden with us.”

“Rest assured, Senior Martial Sister. I’ll take care of him if it comes to that. You won’t have to do anything.” Li Ye gave his word.

“A burden?” Nie Tian rubbed his nose, an unpleasant expression filling his face.

Ever since he had left the Nie clan, he had never been proven to be a burden, not during the Green Illusion dimension trial, nor the turmoil in the Scarlet Flame Mountain Range, or the Heaven Gate trial.

He found it laughable that he had become a burden in Pei Qiqi’s eyes.

“You want to protect him all the way there? You think he’s worth it?” Pei Qiqi asked again.

Li Ye nodded. “Yeah.”

“Okay.” Pei Qiqi didn’t say another word, but rather headed out towards the teleportation portal in the city square.



Nie Tian and Li Ye followed her.

This was the first time that Nie Tian had the opportunity to walk out of his residence after he had come to Shatter City. He kept glancing around as they walked.

Complicated banners hung high up from numerous stone pavilions on both sides of the wide streets.

All sorts of advertisements were written on the banners; some said spiritual materials, some said spiritual tools, some said unexplored dimensions, some said latest information on the Void Illusion Mountain Range, while others said quest recruitment. People could find almost everything they needed in those shops.

Among the numerous Qi warriors that walked in the early morning streets, most had rather high cultivation bases.

Nie Tian used his Heaven Eye to examine a few of them, and found that the Qi warriors that were going into or coming out of those pavilions were all powerful Heaven or Greater Heaven stage experts.

He even discovered two Worldly realm Qi warriors.

Although none of those Qi warriors summoned their spiritual power, Nie Tian managed to detect intense killing intent from every one of them.

Apparently, as Hua Mu had warned him, no one in Shatter City was innocent. They all had blood on their hands and had risen from piles of dead enemies.

To Nie Tian's surprise, many of those powerful experts in the street recognized Pei Qiqi, and greeted her with smiles filling their faces.

“Greetings, Miss Pei.”

“Long time no see, Miss Pei.”

“Please tell your master that I send my regards.”

Pei Qiqi, on the other hand, only nodded to a few of them, neglecting most of the greeters. The only verbal response she gave was to a Worldly realm Qi warrior, who asked her to give his regards to her master, and the response was: “Sure”.

What made Nie Tian even more surprised and confused was that, not only did none of them seem to be irritated by her indifference, but not a single one of them dared to show even the slightest lust in their eyes.

After all, Pei Qiqi was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen in his life. He had even momentarily got lost in a daze the first time he had met her.

It appeared to Nie Tian that all the powerful experts in Shatter

City lived their lives on the edge. From their imposing manner when they talked to others, he could tell that none of them were gentlemen.

Even still, they were all very well-behaved when they greeted Pei Qiqi. Their words were proper and their eyes didn't wander, which Nie Tian found very odd.

Harboring suspicion in mind, he observed increasingly closely, and that was when he saw fear in some greeters' eyes.

It was as if, in those people's eyes, the unearthly beautiful Pei Qiqi was some wild beast that could go mad and eat them alive at any moment.

This made Nie Tian look at her differently, and subconsciously keep a sizable distance between her and himself.

Pei Qiqi's face remained cold and expressionless the entire time, and she didn't smile back at anyone.

Eventually, the three of them arrived by a teleportation portal in the central square.

The moment they arrived, a few black-robed men with Blood Skulls embroidered on their chests approached Pei Qiqi, smiling.

Compared to the fierceness and coldness they had exhibited toward Nie Tian the day he and Hua Mu had arrived, they were

now like completely different people.

Facing Pei Qiqi, not only did they put away their domineering manners, but they even seemed a bit flattering.

One of them took the initiative to bow and ask respectfully, “Do you wish to use the teleportation portal, Miss Pei?”

“Yes.” Pei Qiqi answered. With a subtle movement of her eyes, she beckoned for Li Ye to handle it.

Without any hesitation, Li Ye stepped over to that person and said, “Uncle Liu Kang, we want to go on a brief trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and these are for your trouble.” With these words, he took out fifty spirit stones and handed them to the black-robed man.

The Blood Skull Li Ye referred to as Liu Kang grabbed the spirit stones and turned around to put in coordinates and set up the teleportation portal.

From the way Liu Kang skillfully entered the coordinates, Nie Tian could tell that Pei Qiqi and Li Ye had used the portal to go to the Void Illusion Mountain Range more than once.

A short while later, Liu Kang turned to Pei Qiqi and said, “It’s all set, Miss Pei.”

Pei Qiqi nodded and stepped into the portal, and then Li Ye

followed her in.

Just as Nie Tian was about to enter, Liu Kang stopped him with his hand and said with a cold face, “Who are you?”

Nie Tian could remember clearly that Liu Kang had been on duty the day he and Hua Mu had arrived, but obviously, Liu Kang didn’t remember his face at all.

“He comes with us.” Li Ye beckoned for Nie Tian to enter the portal.

Only then did Liu Kang raise his arm and let Nie Tian through while measuring him up with a suspecting gaze, wondering at his status.

Nie Tian trotted to Li Ye and whispered in his ear, “The Blood Skulls have great respect for you, don’t they? The first time I was here, they acted as if they wanted to eat me alive.”

“Hahaha, of course they did!” Li Ye let out a soft laugh and said proudly, “You should know that my master helped them build this very teleportation portal. If it weren’t for my master, it would never have been established.”

“Oh, that’s how it is.” Everything suddenly made sense to Nie Tian.

“Alright, I’ll start the portal now.” That said, Liu Kang, who was

standing beside the portal, pressed his hand against a strange pattern.

In the next moment, Nie Tian, Pei Qiqi, and Li Ye were engulfed by a blindingly bright light and disappeared from Shatter City.

In the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

Numerous crevices could be seen on a mountain peak that was approximately a thousand meters high. All of a sudden, a bright ball of light shone within one of the crevices.

When the light faded away, three people appeared.

Nie Tian looked down and discovered that the three of them were standing in a teleportation portal significantly smaller than the one in Shatter City.

Not only that, but it also it looked very simple and crude, as if the builder hadn't used many precious materials to build it.

According to the limited knowledge regarding inter-spatial teleportation he had received from Wu Ji, Nie Tian had a feeling that the portal they were standing on didn't have the capacity to carry out inter-realm teleportation.

That meant that the range of this teleportation portal was limited to the Realm of Split Void, unlike the grand inter-spatial teleportation portal in Shatter City, which could even teleport

people to realms outside of the Domain of the Falling Stars.

Removing his gaze from the small teleportation portal, Nie Tian glanced around and discovered that they were in a stone cave within one of the crevices.

There was nothing other than the teleportation portal in the cave, and the mouth of the cave was sealed by a faint shield of spiritual power.

The purpose of the light shield was probably to prevent the polluted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth from entering the cave so that those who teleported to the cave wouldn't be caught off guard and inhale it.

With rapt attention, he looked through the translucent, misty shield, and saw a handful of spatial rifts wiggling non-stop in midair.

Nie Tian couldn't help but wonder where those spatial rifts led to.

Every now and then, terrifying electric arcs would sputter out of them, along with clusters of green fire.

Even though he was still separated from them by a spiritual power shield, Nie Tian had a feeling that the mere act of touching those electric arcs or green flames would instantly get him killed!

“Li Ye, Hua Tian is your responsibility now.” Upon saying these words, Pei Qiqi stepped through the light shield without looking at either one of them.

Nie Tian’s eyes suddenly lit up.

The moment Pei Qiqi walked out of the safe zone, he keenly detected strange spatial fluctuations coming from within her.

It was as if she had used an invisible spatial energy shield to seal herself away from the outside world.

Without any delay, Nie Tian closed his eyes and sent out his psychic awareness to examine her.

He was shocked to find that the aura of Pei Qiqi’s flesh and blood had completely disappeared from the area.

However, she had just stepped out of the stone cave and was standing only several meters away from him.

“Spatial magic! This girl actually practices and mastered the profound spatial energy!” At that moment, Nie Tian took a deep breath as he finally discovered one of the numerous secrets that Pei Qiqi seemed to have.

Only until then did he understand why she had the audacity to bring Li Ye to such a dangerous place, where a wrong turn would kill all of them.



It was known that the Void Illusion Mountain Range was a place where spatial energy was the most unstable, and space disruption zones appeared the most throughout the entire Domain of the Falling Stars.

Perhaps, only people who had mastered spatial magics would dare to set foot in this place at such a young age.

# Chapter 231: I Can't Believe That You Trusted A Woman

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“Let’s do this.” Upon seeing that Pei Qiqi had headed out, the fat Li Ye took out a bracelet from his ring of holding. He handed it to Nie Tian and said, “Put it on.”

Flickering light could be seen inside the light-green jade bracelet. The moment Nie Tian grabbed it, a green light shield that looked like a layer of lake water spread out and enveloped him.

Li Ye took out another bracelet that looked exactly the same and wore it on his wrist. He was surrounded by a green light shield in the next moment.

At that time, Li Ye said with a serious tone, “I’ll take the jade bracelet back when we return to Shatter City.”

Nie Tian smiled. “I understand.”

He used a wisp of his psychic awareness to examine the jade bracelet, and discovered that a mysterious spell formation was branded within it, which was constantly drawing power from the bracelet to maintain the misty, green light shield.

From what Nie Tian could tell, it must serve the purpose of keeping the polluted spiritual Qi in the Void Illusion Mountain Range away from him.

“Alright, we’re good to go.” Li Ye walked out of the stone cave and stood within a crevice that was halfway up the mountain.

Nie Tian followed him out of the cave.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

The moment Nie Tian left the cave, he noticed that wisps of green aura rose from the outer surface of the green light shield, whereupon they made contact with the polluted spiritual Qi.

Without putting too much thought into it, Nie Tian followed Li Ye as they rapidly went down a craggy stone path to the foot of the mountain.

Pei Qiqi was already waiting there.

After coming to a stop, Nie Tian released his psychic awareness to scan the vicinity.

He didn’t discover any signs of life within five hundred meters around him, which was the limit of his psychic power.

He stretched his sight as far as he could, but pale-white rubble and oddly-shaped rocks were all he could see.

When he looked up, he saw nothing but a few spatial rifts slithering in the sky.

From the look of it, they were moving without following any pattern. When they swam close enough to make contact with the mountain, they gashed the mountain like it was a piece of tofu.

That was when Nie Tian realized that the numerous crevices on the mountain had formed in this way.

Nie Tian's expression flickered. "Something is wrong!"

He hadn't been able to get a clear view at the waist of the mountain, but now that he was standing at the mountain's base, he looked up and realized that the mountain peak must have been more than a thousand meters high.

He took note that the peak of the mountain was as smooth as a mirror.

As he thought about what the slithering spatial rifts could do, he realized that it must have been cut short by one of the rifts.

The mountain he saw now was probably only half the height of what it used to be, or maybe even less.

Just as he was pondering the matter, Li Ye's warning woke him from his daze. "Hua Tian, stay close! Don't get separated from us! Also, don't try to use your psychic awareness to examine those spatial rifts. Stay as far away from them as you can. You never know what's going to shoot out of them in the next second, but

you should know that whatever comes out of them will kill you the moment it makes contact with you, considering your cultivation base!”

Li Ye’s words made Nie Tian feel as if he were going to face deadly enemies on the battlefield. He nodded nervously and said, “Don’t worry. I’m not looking forward to dying so young. From now on, wherever you go, I go.”

“That’s the smart thing to do.” Li Ye appraised.

Then, under Pei Qiqi’s leadership, the three of them began marching tightly together through the field of rubble.

As they traveled forward, Pei Qiqi could always skillfully steer clear of the spatial rifts floating low above them. On several occasions, she even seemed to march straight toward a spatial rift, making Nie Tian’s heart pound with nervousness, but when they drew near, the spatial rift would swim away for some unknown reason.

It appeared that she could anticipate the patterns that the spatial rifts moved in and act accordingly.

This ability of hers alone gave her great advantages while traveling in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. If they were to be involved in a battle, such an ability would undoubtedly give her the upper hand.

After marching for a long while, Nie Tian started to see numerous pale-gray skeletons in the cracks between the rocks along their path.

The majority of them seemed to belong to humans, with a small proportion seeming to belong to sizable spirit beasts.

Nie Tian turned to Li Ye and asked, “Didn’t you say that there were no longer spirit beasts in the Realm of Split Void?”

Li Ye, who seemed bored by the journey, answered, “Most of the spirit beasts died because they couldn’t adapt to the terrible living conditions in the Realm of Split Void. However, very few of them somehow managed to survive the hostile environment. Not only that, they even developed the ability to draw power from the tainted spiritual Qi in the air and use it to practice cultivation.

“Those mutant spirit beasts turned out to be much more powerful than they were before.

“Remember, you have to be extra careful if you ever run into a spirit beast in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Most of the poor guys who died here were either killed by spatial rifts or torn to shreds by those formidable spirit beasts.

“Many of them never even got the chance to explore any of the spatial rifts.”

“The strong prey on the weak, and the fittest survive.” Nie Tian

muttered to himself. “It seems that those laws are especially true here.”

The two of them talked while marching forward.

Li Ye took his time to answer every question that Nie Tian asked.

After a short while, Pei Qiqi, who had been walking in the forefront by herself the entire time, suddenly came to a stop.

Li Ye walked up to her and asked, “Is something wrong, Senior Martial Sister?”

Brow furrowed, Pei Qiqi beckoned for Li Ye and Nie Tian to stop talking. “I smell blood,” she said. In the next moment, her ocean-blue figure blurred into a flash, and rapidly disappeared into the distance.

“Come on! Let’s go and see what’s going on!” Li Ye sounded quite excited as he sped off after Pei Qiqi.

Nie Tian chased after him.

It wasn’t very long before the two of them stopped behind an enormous rock where three bodies were lying on the ground. From the fresh bloodstains on them, they could tell that a bloody battle had just taken place there.

All three of them had a pattern of a meteor with a blazing tail on their garments. Apparently, they were with the Wild Fire, which controlled Ash City.

“Pei Qiqi!” A man’s cry rang out from a position not far from them. Extreme terror could be heard in the man’s voice.

Upon hearing the cry, Nie Tian and Li Ye rushed to the source of the sound, where they saw a Qi warrior, who had a gray, crescent moon pattern on his garments, pinned to a big rock by four sharp swords, one in each limb.

Pei Qiqi was standing in front of him and staring at him with a cold look in her eyes.

From the look of it, those four swords belonged to Pei Qiqi, and a brief battle had broken out between them before Nie Tian and Li Ye had arrived.

Nie Tian used his psychic awareness to examine the man’s cultivation base, and found that he was in the late Heaven stage, just like Li Ye.

“Pei Qiqi! As long as you spare my life, I’ll give you a very valuable piece of information!” The way the man looked at Pei Qiqi was as if he was looking at a demon. He pleaded, “I swear that the information is worth much more to you than my life!”

“Okay, spill it,” Pei Qiqi said indifferently.



“You’ll have to promise me that you’ll spare my life first!” The man stared straight into Pei Qiqi’s eyes.

Pei Qiqi nodded in reply.

The man was very emotional as he said, “The Wild Fire just discovered a spirit jade mine not far from here. Although it seems that someone has mined it before, it’s still quite rich! I know that you need spirit jades, since they are very rare and indispensable if you want to build teleportation portals.”

“I’ll tell you the location of the mine, and you’ll let me off, okay?”

Pei Qiqi shook her head. “No.”

In the next moment, the four swords that pinned him down on the rock suddenly flew into the air, before they whizzed down toward the man’s heart and neck.

“Pei Qiqi, you devil! You promised that you’d let me live!” The man’s miserable wails filled the air.

“Can’t believe you trusted a woman.” Pei Qiqi twitched her mouth as she watched the four swords pierce into the man’s heart and neck. After the man stopped breathing, she said, “Also, your information is worth nothing to me.”

Then, the four swords withdrew from the poor man and flew back into Pei Qiqi's ring of holding without a single bloodstain on them.

"You're here already." She turned around and saw Nie Tian and Li Ye.

"Yes, Senior Martial Sister. We just arrived." Li Ye said.

Looking at Pei Qiqi's peerlessly beautiful face, a sense of coldness ran through Nie Tian's body, even though he maintained a calm face.

"Wait for me here." Pei Qiqi turned around and crouched down. She grabbed her victim's bracelet of holding and thoroughly examined it for valuable items.

From the way she skillfully looted the man's belongings, Nie Tian could tell that she had done the same thing to god knows how many people.

By this point, Nie Tian felt that he had come to a better understanding of the girl in front of him, which added to the reason why the outlaws in Shatter City had behaved and humbled themselves while facing Pei Qiqi.

"Looting the dead..." Nie Tian's eyes lit up as he suddenly thought of the three dead Wild Fire members that he had seen on his way to this place.

Since he was in desperate need of spirit stones, he took the initiative to turn around with the intention to hurry back and search those bodies for valuable items.

Pei Qiqi, who was still searching the dead man up and down, realized what Nie Tian's intentions were without even needing to turn her head around, and thus said, "It'll be a waste of your time. I saw those bodies too. Do you think I would leave out valuable things?"

After hearing her words, Nie Tian went blank for a moment before he sped off anyways, since he didn't want to pass up on the opportunity to loot anything, no matter how little their value.

"Moron..." Pei Qiqi muttered.

"Apparently, he isn't familiar with the way you do things." Li Ye remained in his original place, as if he knew what the result would be, and was waiting to taunt Nie Tian when he returned.

As expected, Nie Tian returned in a short while, empty-handed and dispirited.

"Well...?" Li Ye asked with a smirking face.

Nie Tian's face looked very grim as he shook his head and said, "She really did take everything. I couldn't even find one spirit stone."

“Hahaha. That’s what I thought.” Li Ye laughed broadly. “Now you know why senior martial sister beat us here. I’ve worked for her for so many years, and that’s how I learned her way of doing things.”

“Let’s go.” Pei Qiqi urged impatiently, as she seemed to think that Nie Tian was wasting her time.

## Chapter 232: Ethereal Swords

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Disappointed, Nie Tian could only follow Pei Qiqi and Li Ye as the three of them marched out again.

With Pei Qiqi there to lead them, Nie Tian and Li Ye didn't have to worry too much about the spatial rifts that slithered right above their heads as they traveled forward.

“Why do you think that man found that place, senior martial sister?” Li Ye suddenly asked.

“Are you talking about the spirit jade mine?” Pei Qiqi asked, not turning her head to look at Li Ye.

“Yeah.” Li Ye sounded puzzled. “We went to great lengths to find that spirit jade mine. The terrain in that area is extremely complicated. It's almost impossible to get through. I don't understand how those Wild Fire people found it.”

“We can find it, so can others. There's nothing to understand.” Pei Qiqi said indifferently.

Upon hearing her words, Nie Tian's expression flickered as he suddenly realized the information the Dark Moon member had given Pei Qiqi earlier was indeed of no value to her, since that spirit jade mine had been Pei Qiqi and Li Ye's destination the entire time.

Nie Tian turned to Li Ye and asked, “Do members of the Wild Fire and Dark Moon come to the Void Illusion Mountain Range a lot?”

“Of course,” Li Ye answered without thinking. “The Wild Fire, Dark Moon, and Blood Skull all have small teleportation portals set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range so that they can save themselves the trouble of journeying from their bases to here.

“It’s because of those teleportation portals that they can send their members to explore the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“Of course, unlike before, the Void Illusion Mountain Range is no longer filled with spiritual materials, and it’s almost impossible to find any new dimensions through those floating spatial rifts.

“However, people still like to try out their luck in remote corners of the mountain range where it’s more dangerous, but less explored.

“Furthermore, strange items shoot out of those spatial rifts from time to time, most of which can be used to forge high grade spiritual tools.

“It’s just that the Void Illusion Mountain Range has become more and more fatal. On one hand, this is the place where those strong spirit beasts that survived the horrible environment live. On the other, those spatial rifts often become violent for no apparent reason, and with their terrifying destructiveness, they can devour any human who dares to approach in the blink of an eye.”

Li Ye explained everything to Nie Tian as a way to kill time while the three of them traveled forward.

A short while passed...

Pei Qiqi stopped again and said, "Someone is here."

Upon hearing her words, Nie Tian unleashed his psychic awareness to scan the vicinity.

However, no matter how hard he tried, he failed to detect anything.

That was when he came to realize that the strange spatial energy fluctuations in the Void Illusion Mountain Range significantly undermined the accuracy and range of his psychic awareness, but as a master of spatial magics, Pei Qiqi didn't have that problem.

SHEW!

A moment later, Pei Qiqi suddenly sped up, as she didn't want to slow herself down just to wait for Nie Tian and Li Ye.

Upon seeing that, Nie Tian, who had gained nothing so far, dashed after her at his fastest speed possible.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Under the slithering spatial rifts, Nie Tian saw six members of the Wild Fire standing atop a few giant, irregular rocks in a field filled with rubble.

Each and every one of those Heaven stage Qi warriors emitted an intense, murderous aura.

“Pei Qiqi!” Their expressions flickered as they caught sight of Pei Qiqi.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Nie Tian and Li Ye arrived shortly after Pei Qiqi.

Unlike last time, Pei Qiqi didn't seem to be in a hurry to attack them this time. Instead, she seemed to be pondering something while looking up at the numerous interweaving spatial rifts that were swimming closely above their head.

Li Ye also looked up, and a grim expression could be seen on his face.

Nie Tian was puzzled by their behavior. However, from Pei Qiqi and Li Ye's expressions, he assumed that something was happening within those spatial rifts.

Pei Qiqi retracted her gaze and the wisp of her psychic awareness



that she had sent into one of the spatial rifts, as it appeared that she had learned the truth. “Who’s in there?”

The expression of a Qi warrior from the Wild Fire flickered upon hearing Pei Qiqi’s inquiry. “How do you know there are people in there?”

The fat Li Ye let out a cold harrumph and said, “We found the spirit jade mine long ago, and you’re asking us how we know? You six are watchers, aren’t you? How many of you are in there, mining Space Spirit Jades? What cultivation stages are they at? Be honest, and you shall live!”

Nie Tian’s expression flickered as he thought to himself, “The mine is in one of the spatial rifts?! And what are Space Spirit Jades?”

“Actually, we only need one mouth that talks.” Seeing that none of the six people were willing to say anything, Pei Qiqi grew impatient, and once again summoned her four flying swords from within her ring of holding.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Without even the slightest delay, the swords shot towards four of them.

The moment the six Wild Fire members saw the swords, their faces turned pale with fright, and they couldn’t help but cry out,

“Ethereal Swords!”

Nie Tian’s eyes widened as he became amazed by the way the swords traveled in the air.

They flew straight towards their targets for a short while before suddenly vanishing into thin air, as if they had entered another dimension, where even their auras were completely untraceable.

Nie Tian couldn’t determine the location of the swords no matter how hard he tried via his vision or his psychic awareness.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

When the swords appeared in Nie Tian’s sight again, they had already pierced into the four Wild Fire Qi warrior’s necks, killing them on the spot.

Furthermore, the four victims weren’t even the ones that the swords had originally aimed at in the first place!

“Ethereal Swords...” Nie Tian subconsciously touched his own neck as a rush of coldness ran through his body. Dread could be seen in his eyes as he looked at Pei Qiqi.

From what he could tell, Pei Qiqi was able to temporarily hide her Ethereal Swords in the void, so as to prevent their victims from determining their position.

When they appeared again after traveling briefly in another dimension, they had already pierced into their victims' flesh.

Therefore, it was when the four Ethereal Swords disappeared that they became unstoppable.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Two Ethereal Swords pulled themselves out of their victims' necks without the least bit of blood on them. Without any hesitation, they flew towards the remaining two Qi warriors from the Wild Fire.

“Who’s in there?” Pei Qiqi asked indifferently. “What cultivation levels are they at? I won’t ask again.”

Their mental defenses collapsed when the two of them saw the Ethereal Swords disappear shortly after they shot towards them. Thus, they scrambled to answer Pei Qiqi’s question.

“We have four people in there! One at the early Greater Heaven stage and three at the late Heaven stage!”

“The early Greater Heaven stage expert is our exalted Yang Ling.”

“They went in an hour ago. They put us here as scouts, and told

us to collect Space Spirit Jades that fly out of the spatial rifts.”

“Due to the special circumstances, they can’t use their spiritual power while they’re in there. Once they do, it will cause violent changes to the spatial rift and make it extremely unstable and dangerous!”

“That is all that we know. Please, let us go!”

The two Heaven stage members of the Wild Fire, who had been roisterous in their daily lives, had even lost their will to fight facing Pei Qiqi.

“Yang Ling!” Li Ye’s eyebrows furrowed as he said, “Senior martial sister, that guy isn’t easy to deal with.”

Pei Qiqi said, smiling, “He’s hard to deal with when we’re out here, but it’s a whole other story if we fight him in there.”

PUFF! PUFF!

The disappeared two swords suddenly showed up and pierced into the two Wild Fire members’ hearts while they were still fighting to appease Pei Qiqi.

All six members of the Wild Fire died by Pei Qiqi’s Ethereal Swords.

“Time to loot the dead.” Nie Tian’s eyes lit up as he rushed to one of the bodies in an attempt to loot their valuables.

“Stop!” Pei Qiqi’s face grew long as she called out, “Don’t you know the rule? I killed them in battle, which means all the spoils of battle belong to me!

“If you want to gain a fortune, kill someone yourself!

“And all the belongings of those who you killed with your own strength will belong to you.”

“Hua Tian, listen to senior martial sister. That is the rule.” Li Ye hastily mediated between the two of them.

Nie Tian, who was already halfway to one of the corpses, stopped and, with an embarrassed smile on his face, said, “Fine.”

Then, he watched as Pei Qiqi slowly walked to the corpse that she had set her mind on and started searching for spiritual materials.

Only until she had looted every valuable item from the six bodies did she rise up and say, “Alright, let’s get inside.”

# Chapter 233: A Strange Stone Falls from the Heavens

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CRACKLE!

At that moment, an immaculate white jade fell out of the intersection of two spatial rifts and onto the ground.

It was the size of a fist, and emanated a mysterious misty light, along with strong spatial fluctuations.

Pei Qiqi, Nie Tian, and Li Ye, who were just about to enter the spatial rift, went blank for a moment.

Nie Tian and Li Ye exchanged a glance, and strange expressions appeared on their faces.

Staring at the jade, Nie Tian asked, “This is a Space Spirit Jade?”

Li Ye nodded and, looking at the intersection of spatial rifts, he said, “Yang Ling and those Wild Fire members are mining Space Spirit Jades inside.”

Pei Qiqi stepped over to the jade and crouched down to grab it. The moment her hand touched the jade, it morphed into a line of white light and disappeared into her ring of holding.

After that, she turned to Li Ye and Nie Tian and said, “It seems

we don't need to go in so fast.”

Li Ye gave a wretched, low-pitched laugh. “The mere thought of having those Wild Fire people mine Space Spirit Jades for us makes me wanna laugh.”

Nie Tian also found the scene rather laughable.

It wasn't hard to imagine that, at that very moment, four powerful experts of the Wild Fire were sparing no effort to mine Space Spirit Jades.

They probably had never expected that it was Nie Tian, Pei Qiqi and Li Ye who were now collecting the fruits of their labor from the spatial rifts, instead of their own people.

It was at that moment that Nie Tian came to wonder why they didn't put the Space Spirit Jades they had painstakingly mined into their own bracelets of holding or rings of holding, but threw them out instead.

He expressed his doubts to Li Ye, hoping he could give him an answer.

“Technically, the Space Spirit Jade mine isn't in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, but rather in the intersection point between those spatial rifts. I don't know what caused it, but whoever enters it won't dare use their spiritual power, not even in the least bit! Whatever the attribute is, the use of any spiritual power will

immediately trigger great upheavals.

“Furthermore, due to the special spatial fluctuations, all sorts of storage spiritual tools will also lose their effectiveness in there.

“That’s why I brought you here. It’ll take nothing but physical strength to mine Space Spirit Jades in there. Your cultivation base won’t matter. Since you’re quite strong, I bet you’ll be able to help us mine more Space Spirit Jades.

“Oh, one more thing, you’ll have to take off the jade bracelet I gave you before you enter the spatial rift.

“The spiritual power shield the jade bracelet creates will also trigger strong fluctuations in there and thus put us in danger.”

BANG!

While they were speaking, another Space Spirit Jade fell out of the intersection of spatial rifts.

It landed right next to Nie Tian’s feet.

Just as Nie Tian bent down to take a closer look at it, Pei Qiqi came over and snatched it.

Then, she looked at Nie Tian, who had a frustrated look in his eyes, and said, “I killed those six Wild Fire members. Therefore,



these Space Spirit Jades, which were intended for them, should belong to me. Don't you think so?"

"Yeah, I guess," said Nie Tian.

So far, he already had a good idea of this woman's fierceness and brutality, so he didn't even imagine trying get anything out of her pocket.

Moreover, he assumed that it was still going to be a while before they left the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Therefore, he still had time, and other chances might present themselves.

"Good." Pei Qiqi was quite content that Nie Tian had learned the rule.

After that, more Space Spirit Jades flew out of the intersection of spatial rifts.

Pei Qiqi took each and every one of them, not even leaving one for her junior martial brother, Li Ye, not to mention Nie Tian.

It seemed that Li Ye was already used to the way she did things, as he smiled the whole time, without even the least bit of anger in his eyes.

Nie Tian also found a way to make peace with Pei Qiqi's possessive and domineering behavior. After all, neither him nor Li Ye had been of any help to her after they had arrived in the Void

Illusion Mountain Range.

Time passed quickly. Two hours later, the amount of Space Spirit Jades that shot out of the intersection of the spatial rifts had gradually reduced.

After noticing that, Pei Qiqi frowned and said, “It’s about time.”

She looked up at the intersection point of the spatial rifts. “Those Wild Fire members must have grown weary after mining nonstop for so long. I think it’s about time they came out of there to get some fresh air and eat something.

“However, they only need to consume their physical strength in there, so that means their spiritual power is still at a high level.

“If we wait for them to come out and deal with them here, it will be a tough battle for us.”

With these words, she took a deep breath and said, “I’ll go inside first. You two come in after me.”

SHEW!

Pei Qiqi blurred into a ocean-blue flash and flew into the intersection point between the spatial rifts.

Li Ye’s spirit was lifted. “It’s our turn now. I’ll go first. You pay

attention and watch how I do it. Also, don't forget to put away your jade bracelet before you enter!"

WHOOSH!

With a vigorous leap, Li Ye's fat body charged toward the part where several spatial rifts met.

The misty, green light shield around him disappeared right before he entered.

Nie Tian, who had closely observed how Pei Qiqi and Li Ye had done it, imitated them and bolted toward the location where they had disappeared. As he had been instructed, he put away his jade bracelet the moment before he shot into the spatial rift.

SHEW!

In the next moment, Nie Tian found himself in a spacious cave.

On the walls of the cave, he could see numerous shiny, translucent stones, which Nie Tian believed to be none other than unmined Space Spirit Jades.

"Pei Qiqi!" Standing not far from him, four Qi warriors of the Wild Fire were glaring at the three of them, bone-piercing cold looks in their eyes.

Their leader was a man who was so tall and skinny that he looked like a bamboo pole.

The moment he saw Pei Qiqi, he seemed to have guessed what had happened to their partners on the other side. “You’ve killed all six of them, haven’t you?”

“Not only have I killed them, but I’ve also taken the Space Spirit Jades that you mined.” Pei Qiqi said bluntly.

The man gave a cold snort and said, “Pei Qiqi, do you really think you can do whatever you like in the Void Illusion Mountain Range?”

“Well, at least you’re not strong enough to kill me.” Pei Qiqi didn’t back down a bit.

“You’ve come to the wrong place.” Yang Ling grinned and said, “No matter how powerful you are out there, you can’t use your spatial magics in here. Do you really have the confidence that you’ll be able to kill the four of us only relying on your physical strength?”

“You bet I do.” Pei Qiqi replied firmly.

While the two of them went tit for tat against each other, Nie Tian glanced around, and noticed that numerous lines of colorful light were slithering about within the cave.

As fine and splendid as they seemed, Nie Tian had a feeling that once they were triggered, their power would be enough to set the whole cave ablaze.

Therefore, he guessed that those gorgeous light ribbons were the unstable factors that Li Ye had warned him about.

They would annihilate whoever dared to use their spiritual power inside the cave.

“Li Ye, can I use my psychic power here?” He asked softly.

Li Ye’s face was very grim as he said, “No! Don’t you try to use your psychic power here. If you do, your soul will undoubtedly suffer a severe backlash, which might turn out to be fatal!”

“Alright.” Nie Tian gave up on the idea.

“The way I see it, this is actually good for us,” Li Ye continued. “Yang Ling and his men have cultivation bases that are higher than ours. We can’t use our psychic power, but neither can they. As a matter of fact, you might have come to the perfect place this time. Your physical strength might play a crucial role here.”

With these words, Li Ye took a step back and stood behind Nie Tian.

“As you can see, I’m too fat to fight physical battles. There’s no way I can beat them. It’s time for you to prove yourself.” Li Ye

urged Nie Tian to fight the battle for him.

“Li Ye, Hua Tian, you take the other three. Leave Yang Ling to me.” Pei Qiqi issued the command.

“Good! Very good!” Yang Ling laughed evilly. “I finally get to see how awesome Pei Qiqi of Shatter City is! You’ve killed more than a few members of the Wild Fire with your spatial magics in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. I’ll walk out of here with your corpse today!”

# Chapter 234: Unparalleled Strength!

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Normally speaking, those who had a higher cultivation base would have a more refined and stronger fleshy body.

Therefore, even if the uniqueness of this place didn't allow them to use their spiritual power, the early Greater Heaven stage Yang Ling should have the upper hand in fighting everyone else relying only on his physical strength.

Although Nie Tian hadn't been able to see through Pei Qiqi's cultivation base, he assumed, considering her age, that she couldn't be at a cultivation stage higher than Yang Ling.

It might even be possible that she was also at the late Heaven stage, the same as Li Ye. It was her special incantations that had enabled her to kill so many powerful experts with higher cultivation bases in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, which made her seem more powerful than she really was.

On the other hand, the way Yang Ling had behaved backed Nie Tian's assumption. He had to know that Pei Qiqi's actual cultivation base was lower than his, and thus had such great confidence in winning.

After a moment of pondering, Nie Tian came to the conclusion that Pei Qiqi's true cultivation base was probably the same as Li Ye's.

"You three, go and kill those two brats." Yang Ling let out a cold

harrumph and strode towards Pei Qiqi.

On his way, he pulled up a shovel that he had used to mine Space Spirit Jade from the ground next to his feet.

Nie Tian looked at the shovel with rapt attention, and found that there indeed weren't even the slightest spiritual power fluctuations around it, which meant that even Yang Ling was afraid that using his spiritual power here would make himself suffer a great backlash from those colorful lights and put his life in danger.

Pei Qiqi shifted two steps to her side and skillfully avoided Yang Ling's attack. In the meantime, she urged Nie Tian and Li Ye to fight, as if she didn't think much of Yang Ling at all. "Li Ye, Hua Tian, what are you doing? Fight your enemies!"

"Go!" Li Ye suddenly shoved Nie Tian from behind, causing him to stagger into the center of the three Heaven stage Wild Fire members.

The three of them grinned viciously before each of them picked up a shovel from the ground and hacked towards Nie Tian.

"No spiritual power, physical strength only..." Surrounded by three powerful experts, Nie Tian looked at the sinister expressions on their faces and smiled.

Ever since he was a boy, he had eaten more than other juniors in



the Nie clan. Every time he had fought his peers with higher cultivation bases, he had won thanks to his unparalleled physical strength.

After he left the Nie clan, he had consumed large amounts of spirit beast meat and tempered his fleshy body during the Green Illusion dimension trial, the upheaval in the Scarlet Flame Mountain Range, and the bloodbaths in the Heaven Gate trial. His physical strength had risen to a point where it was terrifying.

Seeing the three Wild Fire members attacking him together with shovels, he didn't cower in the least.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The moment those shovels slashed down from the air, Nie Tian struck with his fists at the speed of lightning, knocking the shovels out of his enemies' hands.

Before they could recover from their astonishment, Nie Tian rammed into one of them like a stampeding, wild beast.

CRUNCH!

The sound of bones cracking rang out from within the person's chest.

He immediately coughed up a mouthful of blood as he was sent flying backward to a corner of the cave.

BANG!

By the time he crashed into the cave wall, the light had already disappeared from his eyes.

“What the hell?!” Standing not far from Nie Tian, Li Ye couldn’t help but exclaim as he held a dagger in his hand.

Actually, Li Ye hadn’t just stood by and watched after shoving Nie Tian into the crowd of enemies.

He had taken out a sharp dagger that shone with cold light and snuck up upon one of the Wild Fire members in an attempt to attack him from behind.

He found the perfect opportunity to stab the man the moment he swung his shovel down towards Nie Tian.

However, just as his dagger was about to go into the man’s back, Nie Tian ran into him and knocked him flying like a war chariot.

Li Ye remained in the middle of his stabbing action as he looked blankly at the man who had crashed into the cave wall with blood spilling out of his mouth and nose.

After going blank for a moment, Li Ye couldn’t help but blurt, “What in the world are you made of, Hua Tian?”

The eyes of the other two turned red after seeing their friend be killed by Nie Tian with one strike.

The two of them roared as they fetched their shovels and once again swung them towards Nie Tian's back and left arm.

“Hahaha!” Nie Tian laughed and said, “Attacking me with your laughable physical strength... You must have a death wish!”

BANG! BANG!

As soon as their shovels made contact with Nie Tian's body, their expressions flickered drastically.

They felt as if their full-strength swings had been met with a solid rock that was even tougher than the Space Spirit Jades embedded in the cave wall.

Nie Tian, on the other hand, felt nothing but a mild ache after taking the hits. He didn't even have a scratch on his body.

“You two can die now!” After realizing that he was significantly stronger than them, Nie Tian decided to go all-out to attack and hold nothing back.

With a swift move, he clutched the backs of their necks with his hands.

BANG!

The two powerful Wild Fire experts felt like an iron lock had been hooked onto their necks. Pushed by Nie Tian's irresistible strength, their foreheads clunked together, causing them to bleed from the forehead.

Just as the two of them were dizzy and disoriented, Nie Tian picked them up by grabbing their necks again. When their feet left the ground, they desperately struggled to kick Nie Tian.

However, compared to the tall and robust Nie Tian, they were much smaller and weaker.

The kicks they summoned all their strength to launch dealt no damage to Nie Tian. Nie Tian still stood unwavering, seemingly completely unaffected.

Before long, the two Wild Fire experts' faces turned dark-red, and they had great difficulty breathing. It seemed that they were going to suffocate in the next moment.

"Hua Tian! Kill them now!" Li Ye reminded him in a loud voice.

It was at that moment that Nie Tian frowned as he noticed the strong killing intent in his dying enemies' eyes. Apparently, they knew that they would face certain death if they didn't do anything, so they decided to resort to their spiritual power, hoping to kill Nie

Tian before he killed them.

CRUNCH!

Just as they were about to summon their spiritual power, Nie Tian snapped their neck bones with a violent squeeze.

In the next moment, their heads sagged down as they died instantly.

Flabbergasted, Li Ye muttered, “Such monstrous strength! Is this guy a spirit beast from the Void Illusion Mountain Range in disguise or what?!”

He simply found it unbelievable that Nie Tian had killed three powerful enemies in such a short time.

He had only brought Nie Tian to this place with the intention of using his strength to help them mine and carry Space Spirit Jades.

Never had he expected that Nie Tian had physical strength so formidable that it almost seemed inhuman.

After all, Nie Tian was only at the Lesser Heaven stage, while the three people he had killed had been at the Heaven stage.

Even though they had an advantage in both number and cultivation base, they couldn't even put up a fight when they faced

Nie Tian's overwhelming strength.

“Hua Tian...” Even Pei Qiqi, who was fighting Yang Ling up close, was astounded by Nie Tian's effectiveness.

She had been focused on her battle against Yang Ling, and hadn't noticed how Nie Tian had killed his enemies.

When she overheard Li Ye marvel at Nie Tian's strength and spared them a glance, she found, to her surprise, that Nie Tian had already finished off all three of them, and Nie Tian was standing there, nonchalant and with a bored look in his eyes.

It seemed he was unsatisfied that his opponents had failed to give him any challenge.

Yang Ling also noticed Nie Tian's exceptional battle prowess, and asked with a grim face, “Who's that kid?”

After all, those three were seasoned Heaven stage Qi warriors, and they knew how to make joint attacks against their enemies.

Even Yang Ling wasn't confident that he would be able to kill them if the three of them teamed up on him.

The fact that Nie Tian had killed them in such a short time made Yang Ling's heart grow heavy.

“This is not good.” After realizing that the seemingly unimpressive young man possessed formidable physical strength, Yang Ling sensed the unfavorable situation.

WHOOSH!

Without any sign, he ditched Pei Qiqi and dashed toward the entrance of the cave.

“Don’t let him get away!” Li Ye yelled.

“Got it.” Nie Tian replied as he turned around and beat Yang Ling to the entrance. He stood there and smiled at him.

“Didn’t you say you would leave this place with Pei Qiqi’s dead body?”

Yang Ling glowered at Nie Tian. “Get the hell out of my way!”

“What if I don’t?” Nie Tian tilted his head and looked at Yang Ling, confidence filling his eyes. “I know I can’t defeat you out there. But as long as we’re in here, I can kill you as easily as I did your three lackeys.”

## Chapter 235: He Is Mine!

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Fuming with anger, Yang Ling shouted, “I’ll say it one more time! Get out of my way!”

Being one of the most respected characters in the Wild Fire, Pei Qiqi’s previous words and Nie Tian’s disdainful manner had truly enraged him.

He could make peace with the way Pei Qiqi had provoked him. After all, she had her special abilities, and no one had been able to hurt her throughout the years.

Every member of the Wild Fire, Dark Moon, and Blood Skull knew her reputation as a vicious talker.

However, who was this Nie Tian person?

A nobody with a Lesser Heaven stage cultivation base had actually dared to join Pei Qiqi to humiliate him. He couldn’t let this happen!

“Hahaha!” Nie Tian laughed and shook his head as he said, “You’ve got quite a mouth for someone who’s going to die soon.”

WHOOSH!

Nie Tian shot towards Yang Ling like a cannonball as he



attempted to bombard him and kill him with his rock-hard fleshy body.

Yang Ling's pupils shrank and a strong killing intent appeared in his eyes, "You're courting death!"

All of a sudden, an intense cold aura rose from within Yang Ling's body!

Even though Pei Qiqi didn't notice how Nie Tian had killed the other three Wild Fire members, Yang Ling, who possessed superior strength, had witnessed the whole process.

He was aware that if he didn't resort to his spiritual power at all, he would very likely be killed by Nie Tian in the same way he had killed his three sidekicks.

Bearing that thought in mind, he decided to make a risky move to save himself from such a desperate situation.

However, as soon as the wisps of frost power flowed out of his spiritual sea, the colorful lights that had been swimming around in every corner of the cave seemed to have discovered a vent.

One after another, they whizzed towards him like razor-sharp, fine threads.

In merely a moment, Yang Ling's slender body was covered in numerous fine wounds.

However, despite the painful injuries, he once again forcibly summoned frost power from his spiritual sea, turning his hands into two ice pitons and thrusting them towards Nie Tian's chest.

CRUNCH!

Even more colorful lights rapidly converged on his translucent, icy hands, cutting open numerous bloody wounds.

Yang Ling gave a muffled groan as his soul even seemed to have sustained serious injuries. Even still, he bore the excruciating pain and assumed a manner that implied that he would only stop when he had killed Nie Tian.

“Stop, Nie Tian!” Li Ye called out.

Nie Tian, who was rapidly closing in on Yang Ling, also sensed the danger.

He came to a stop when he was two meters away from Yang Ling and began to step backwards.

“Go to hell!” As Yang Ling let out an angry roar, the countless fine wounds on him suddenly burst open, spilling out large amounts of blood.

At that moment, Yang Ling was like a trapped monster. He no

longer cared about what would happen to himself as long as he could kill Nie Tian on the spot. Even if it meant that he would pay the price of his own life.

The reckless Yang Ling rapidly approached Nie Tian while his blood sputtered in every direction.

As he did, more colorful lights whizzed by, turning his body into a bloody mess.

From what Nie Tian could tell, now that Yang Ling had become the target of every colorful light in the cave, even if he didn't attack him himself, those countless colorful lights would kill him eventually.

However, it seemed that Yang Ling had already forgotten about his own life. All he wanted was to kill Nie Tian as quickly as possible.

“You seem to have enough dancing partners already.” With these words, Nie Tian decided not to fight Yang Ling head-on. Instead, he swiftly shifted his position to avoid him.

By doing that, he even showed Yang Ling the exit, but he didn't think it was a big deal, since even if he escaped from the mine to the Void Illusion Mountain Range, considering his condition, he would most likely collapse due to those deep cuts.

By that time, he and Li Ye might be strong enough to kill him.

They wouldn't even need Pei Qiqi to help them.

“You can't hide from me!” Yang Ling roared as he shot numerous ice blades that carried bone-piercing coldness towards Nie Tian, hoping to use them to slice Nie Tian into shreds before he left the cave.

However, the colorful lights' targets weren't limited to those who used their spiritual power in the cave. They would also target anything that was condensed by spiritual power.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

As the ice blades flew towards Nie Tian, countless colorful lights swooped in from every direction and entangled them, causing their might to decline significantly.

By the time they reached Nie Tian, they were already like arrows at the end of their flight, leaving only a few shallow scrapes on Nie Tian's skin.

“What?!” Observing with her eyes narrowed from the side, Pei Qiqi couldn't help but exclaim, after seeing that the ice blades barely hurt Nie Tian.

According to her assessment, even though Yang Ling's ice blades had been greatly weakened by the colorful lights, they should have been able to give Nie Tian numerous bloody gashes.

After all, Nie Tian was only at the Lesser Heaven stage. How refined his fleshy body could be?

She even felt that her junior martial brother, Li Ye, would sustain serious injuries after being bombarded by those weakened ice blades.

It didn't make sense that Nie Tian was almost unhurt.

After pondering the matter for a short while, her eyes shone with a strange light.

She suddenly came to the realization that Hua Mu must have refined this young man's body before he sent him to this place, giving him an exceptionally strong and solid body.

Only that would explain why he was able to withstand those ice blades without using any spiritual power.

Before now, she hadn't attached any importance to Nie Tian. She was even slightly disgusted by the fact that Hua Mu had stuffed this nephew of his into her hands, and thus she had assigned him to Li Ye.

Only at this point did she finally look at Nie Tian in a different way.

"He's still not dead!?" The fact that Nie Tian had survived his attack left Yang Ling in shock.

He had planned to kill Nie Tian with the least effort possible before getting out of the cave and the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Now that Nie Tian was almost unscathed, it put him in a dilemma.

“You even used your spiritual power, and this is all you’ve got?” With these words, Nie Tian once again swiftly shifted toward the exit. His gaze passed Yang Ling and landed on Pei Qiqi. “As long as I’m the one who kills him, I’ll get to take all his belongings?”

Pei Qiqi nodded and said, “That’s right. That’s the rule I set, so I’ll live by it myself.”

“Great!” Nie Tian grinned. “This Yang Ling person is mine. Don’t you fight me for him.”

From what Nie Tian could tell, Yang Ling was already on the verge of collapsing.

After condensing those ice blades and controlling them to attack Nie Tian, he had already sustained a severe backlash. At this point, he was already too weak to pose a threat to him.

After getting Pei Qiqi’s consent, he pointed at Yang Ling and said, “I’m standing right here. You’ll have to get through me to leave this place!”

“Good! Good!! Even if I die here today, I’ll kill you first!!” His thunderous rage seemed to have caused Yang Ling to lose his mind. As he barked, numerous colorful lights shot toward his gash-covered body.

At that moment, he already didn’t have a single piece of undamaged skin on him.

Watching from a safe distance, the fat Li Ye said harshly, “Man... I never expected that the famous Yang Ling of the Wild Fire would end up being so miserable.

“Hey, Uncle Yang, what are you waiting for? If you don’t strike soon, I suspect that you’ll die even before Hua Tian attacks you.”

PUFF!

His words further enraged Yang Ling and worsened his injuries. He coughed up a mouthful of blood and said, “Shut up!!!”

“I only warned you with good intentions. I suggest you save your breath. That way you’ll be able to strike harder.” Li Ye didn’t have the slightest intention of stopping.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

Wisps of white, misty frost auras rose from within Yang Ling’s

body; some of them were offset by the colorful lights that converged from every direction, while others were condensing into a bright sphere with Yang Ling at the center.

“It’s my turn now.” Instead of waiting for Yang Ling to attack him, Nie Tian frowned and charged towards Yang Ling.

Although Yang Ling currently needed more time than usual to launch his spiritual incantation, he feared that, given enough time, he would still be able to inflict serious damage on him. After all, he was a Greater Heaven stage expert.

BOOM!

Like a frenzied beast, Nie Tian charged into Yang Ling’s frost mist zone, scattering the frost auras before his fist bombarded Yang Ling’s forehead.

CRUNCH!

Yang Ling’s skull was smashed in before he could finish his spell. Then, his corpse collapsed to the ground.



# Chapter 236: People Can't Get Rich without Luck

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“Uh...” Li Ye, who had been jabbering and ridiculing Yang Ling, suddenly stopped. His jaw dropped.

Pei Qiqi's face was also filled with shock, as she had never expected that Yang Ling wouldn't even be able to withstand a single blow from Nie Tian, and died before his spiritual incantation was finished.

Only after a long time did Li Ye snap out of his daze and say, “This seems a bit too easy, doesn't it?”

“This guy...” Pei Qiqi frowned slightly as she found herself unable to remove her gaze from Nie Tian, who now seemed shockingly mysterious.

Although she had the confidence to kill Yang Ling on her own from the start, she was prepared to go through strong resistance to achieve that and didn't believe that she would have been able to kill him as quickly and effortlessly as Nie Tian had.

Nie Tian seemed somewhat bashful as he looked Pei Qiqi in the eye, smiling. “All their belongings are mine now, right?”

“Yeah, I meant what I said,” Pei Qiqi replied.

Nie Tian's eyes lit up as he rapidly stepped toward Yang Ling's body with a broad smile on his face. Without any hesitation, he bent down and began searching the body for valuable items.

The early Greater Heaven stage Yang Ling also possessed a ring of holding. Nie Tian took it off with a swift motion and was about to examine what was inside of it.

"Now is not the time. Let's get out of here first," Pei Qiqi reminded him.

Li Ye also stepped over and reminded Nie Tian, "All sorts of storage spiritual tools lose their effects here, and you can't use your psychic power while we're in here. Otherwise, you'll suffer from a lethal backlash."

Upon hearing their words, Nie Tian immediately stopped and put Yang Ling's ring of holding into the pocket by his waist.

After a thorough search, Nie Tian didn't find any other valuable items.

Then, he stepped over to the bodies of the other three Wild Fire members, took off their bracelets of holding from their wrists, and put them away in his pocket.

"Every ring of holding has a spatial energy shield to prevent others from using it," said Pei Qiqi. "I'll help you disengage it when we're out of here."

“Oh, great! Thanks in advance then!” Nie Tian said, smiling.

He had also heard that a low-grade bracelet of holding didn't have a restrictive spell, so once its owner was killed, the killer would be able to snatch and use it.

Rings of holding, however, were different. Since they were more advanced, a restrictive spell was always built within every ring of holding.

Only by cracking the restrictive spell would a person other than the owner be able to check and loot what was in them.

Since Pei Qiqi's mastery of spatial magics and spells was outstanding, helping Nie Tian disengage the ring of holding's protective shield was as easy as ABC to her. If she hadn't offered to do that for him, he would have had to go through a great deal of trouble doing it himself.

“You've hit gold, Hua Tian!” Li Ye said excitedly. “One early Greater Heaven stage and three late Heaven stage experts! They must have quite a few spiritual materials and spirit stones in their storage tools! You've made a great fortune by coming to the Void Illusion Mountain Range with me. The items you've gained today will be enough to get you through quite some time in Shatter City.”

“Thank you,” Nie Tian said, smiling.

He was in a good mood after killing four powerful experts and plundering their belongings.

He had been worrying about getting more spirit stones since the day he had come to Shatter City. Working for Li Ye hadn't turned out to be productive for him.

He had never expected that he would obtain three bracelets of holding and one ring of holding from such an easy battle.

This was definitely a great fortune for him.

"It's like what they say: people can't get rich without good luck!" He thought to himself.

Pei Qiqi didn't have any expression on her face as she said, "Alright, it's time to get down to business. Don't forget the reason why we're here. Now that both members of the Wild Fire and Dark Moon have learned about this mine, we'd better mine as much Space Spirit Jade as we can this time. Otherwise, I'm afraid that it will be an empty mine the next time we come back."

"Exactly, the Space Spirit Jades are what we've come for," Li Ye said.

"Let's get started then." Pei Qiqi picked up a shovel and walked to a corner of the cave. Without any delay, she started digging.

“Here. Take this.” Li Ye picked up a shovel from the ground and tossed it to Nie Tian before he grabbed another one for himself. While digging, he said, “Hua Tian, we discovered this Space Spirit Jade mine, and you’re only here because I brought you here. Therefore, you’ll give us two thirds of the Space Spirit Jades you mine from this place.”

“No problem.” Nie Tian, who was still in a good mood, agreed without thinking.

On the other hand, he was aware that if it weren’t for Li Ye, he would never have the audacity to explore the Void Illusion Mountain Range by himself, much less find this Space Spirit Jade mine.

Hence, he assumed Li Ye’s demand made sense.

CRACK! CRACK! CRACK!

The three of them laboriously swung their shovels inside the spacious mine.

Numerous glittering spots could be seen on the walls of the stone cave, which were where the crude Space Spirit Jades were embedded.

They had to separate them from the stone walls first, and then get rid of the impurities that adhered to them. Only then would the pure, translucent Space Spirit Jades present themselves.

Most importantly, they couldn't use even the least bit of spiritual power during the process, only their physical strength.

As powerful as Pei Qiqi was in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, the unique environment made her mining efficiency far inferior to Nie Tian's.

By the time she finished with one Space Spirit Jade, Nie Tian had already mined and processed three.

Meanwhile, Li Ye was slower than even Pei Qiqi. By the time he finished with one Space Spirit Jade, Nie Tian had already had six pure Space Spirit Jades laying on the ground next to him.

Two hours later...

There was already a sizable pile of Space Spirit Jades by Nie Tian's side, while only about ten Space Spirit Jades could be seen lying on the ground next to Pei Qiqi's feet, and five next to Li Ye's.

A short while passed...

The Space Spirit Jades Nie Tian had mined and processed had already piled up into a small hill.

Pei Qiqi and Li Ye had over-consumed their physical strength and been forced to stop. After all, physical labor wasn't their strong

suit. Sweat dripping from their faces, they could only stand there and watch Nie Tian work tirelessly.

Their arms felt sore and powerless as they were thirsty and famished. All they wanted was to find a place to recuperate.

“What this Hua Tian guy is made of?” Li Ye muttered to himself. Then he turned to Pei Qiqi and asked, “Senior martial sister, how about we get out of here and get something to eat?”

All their food and water was stored in their rings of holding, which they could only use outside of the mine.

Furthermore, someone would have to carry the finished Space Spirit Jades outside and then put them away into their rings of holding.

“Alright. Let’s do that and come back after a short break. It seems Hua Tian is still doing good. Let him work then.” Pei Qiqi sounded somewhat frustrated.

She knew very well that this was their last chance to mine the Space Spirit Jades here. As much as she wanted to stay with Nie Tian and mine as many Space Spirit Jades as possible, her fleshy body didn’t allow her to do so, unlike Nie Tian’s.

Upon hearing their plan to take a break outside, Nie Tian turned to them and said, “Will you carry these jades out and store them in your rings of holding for me?”

“You can just toss them through the gate to us when we’re out,” Li Ye said.

“That works too,” Nie Tian answered.

Soon after Pei Qiqi and Li Ye stepped through the exit, Nie Tian counted the Space Spirit Jades he had mined while throwing them through the exit one after another.

Afterwards, he went back to his painstaking work to mine more Space Spirit Jades for the sake of his future life in Shatter City.

After working for several hours straight, Nie Tian still felt rather energetic.

Suddenly, after laboring for a short while, he swung his shovel at a crude Space Spirit Jade in the stone wall and a crisp clanking sound rang out.

“What?!” Nie Tian went blank for a moment before he closely examined the location where the sound had come from.

At that moment, Li Ye and Pei Qiqi returned to the mine and Li Ye said loudly, “We’re back, Hua Tian. How are you doing?”

“Hey, come and take a look. Do you know what this is?” Nie Tian said.



Pei Qiqi rapidly stepped past Li Ye and arrived at Nie Tian's side. As soon as she did, a flowery scent entered Nie Tian's nose, making him feel intoxicated.

In the next moment, Pei Qiqi's gentle exclamation woke Nie Tian from his drunken state. "I didn't expect that we'd run into one of these here!"

# Chapter 237: Space Spirit Crystal!

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Pure, bright light shot out of a diamond-shaped crystal, illuminating the originally dim cave like it was under broad daylight.

The crystal was embedded in a huge Space Spirit Jade. It seemed to be a part of the jade, yet it was very different.

The crystal was far clearer and more transparent, and the spatial fluctuations it emitted were far more intense.

PHEW! PHEW!

The numerous colorful light threads seemed to become attracted by it as soon as the crystal was unearthed, since they suddenly began to converge on it.

Nie Tian sensed its uniqueness and the changes it had caused. Staring at it with curiosity filling his eyes, he asked softly, “What is it?”

Pei Qiqi, who was now only inches away from Nie Tian, also had her eyes that were as bright as stars fixed on the crystal. Nie Tian could even feel her breathing grow more rapid.

It seemed that she hadn’t heard Nie Tian’s words, as her attention had been completely seized by the diamond-shaped crystal.

With a sniff of her pleasant, flowery scent, Nie Tian didn't ask again. Instead, he waited in silence for her to calm herself.

Standing so close to Pei Qiqi, Nie Tian ran his gaze over her delicate, milky-white face and felt it was prettier than that glittering crystal.

“What did you find, Hua Tian, Senior Martial Sister?”

The fat Li Ye walked slowly forward as he approached Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi and stuck his head through the gap between them.

With a single glance at it, Li Ye waved his hands and stamped his feet in joy. “It's a crystallized Space Spirit Jade!

“I can't believe we were able to find one of these here, in such a small Space Spirit Jade mine! We're so lucky!”

Nie Tian didn't know anything about spiritual materials that contained spatial energy. He didn't know what they could use Space Spirit Jades for, much less the use and rarity of Space Spirit Crystals.

“Is this thing more precious than a Space Spirit Jade?” He asked subconsciously.

Li Ye rolled his eyes at him as if he were talking to a fool. “Of

course! Do you know the difference between the value of a spirit crystal and a spirit jade? The difference between the value of a crystallized Space Spirit Jade and a Space Spirit Jade is even greater. You can trade one spirit crystal for a hundred spirit jades in the other nine realms. However, you can trade one crystallized Space Spirit Jade for five hundred Space Spirit Jades!

“Space Spirit Jades are essential materials for building teleportation portals, while crystallized Space Spirit Jades are used to forge spatial spiritual tools that are even more powerful.

“I’m not talking about rings of holding or bracelets of holding. I’m talking about extremely precious spiritual tools that can distort space!

“Spatial spiritual tools are hard to find in any realm. Not only because they are hard to forge, but also because it’s very difficult to gather all the necessary materials. From what I know, back when the Realm of Split Void was still one of the most powerful realms in the Domain of the Falling Stars and the Void Palace Sect were still thriving, the Void Palace Sect was the only sect that possessed a Spirit Channeling-grade spatial spiritual tool.

“The Void Palace sect only prospered in the Void Illusion Mountain Range because of it!

“Since crystallized Space Spirit Jades are the most important materials in forging Spirit Channeling-grade spatial spiritual tools, they are one of the most wanted types of spiritual materials throughout the realms. Powerful experts have even started wars for them!”

After realizing what it was, Li Ye's eyes turned red from excitement.

On the other hand, Nie Tian listened to his explanation while observing Pei Qiqi's expression. He discovered that when Li Ye mentioned the Void Palace Sect, Pei Qiqi's eyes suddenly wandered away from the crystallized Space Spirit Jade, as she seemed to become lost in her memories.

He even briefly saw a hint of sadness in her eyes.

However, she seemed to have put away her emotions in the next moment.

She turned to Nie Tian and said, "You'll only need to give Li Ye a third of the Space Spirit Jades that you've mined. I'm willing to give up my share."

"Why?" Nie Tian was surprised.

She pointed to the crystallized Space Spirit Jade and said, "I want that."

Li Ye jumped in and said, "Hua Tian, that crystallized Space Spirit Jade is of no use in your hands. That's a pretty good deal. Only experts in spatial magics like my senior martial sister will be able to use a spatial spiritual tool, and crystallized Space Spirit Jades are indispensable to forge high-grade spatial spiritual tools.

It means much more to her than to you.

“Even if you take it and sell it, you won’t be able to get a better deal than that in the Realm of Split Void.”

“I see,” Nie Tian nodded and said with a smile. “I’ve made more gains than I ever expected from this trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Because you want this crystallized Space Spirit Jade so much, and you’re willing to make a fair trade for it, I shall accept the honor.”

Pei Qiqi was quite content. “Neat. I like your manner of doing things.” After a moment of pondering, she said, “How about this: I’ll help you sell the Space Spirit Jades in Shatter City, along with the spiritual materials and that you’ve looted from those Wild Fire members.

“You just need to tell me if you want to trade them for spirit stones or if you have something particular in mind. I’ll help you with it, either way.

“I guarantee you that with me there to help you sell them, you’ll get more in return than you would have if you sold them yourself.”

Nie Tian’s eyes lit up as he said, “Thank you!”

“Alright, it’s about time that we wrapped things up here,” Pei Qiqi urged. “Let’s get that crystallized Space Spirit Jade, gather and process the jades that you’ve already dug out, and leave.”

It appeared that she didn't want to wait for another second to take the crystallized Space Spirit Jade and return to Shatter City.

Upon hearing her order, Nie Tian and Li Ye got down to work again.

An hour later, they stepped out of the almost-emptied mine with the crystallized Space Spirit Jade in their hands.

In the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

Nie Tian, Pei Qiqi, and Li Ye, who had already put their jade bracelets back on, were traveling along the same route that they had taken to get to the mine.

After the battle in the mine, the jade mining, and Nie Tian's attitude when she had demanded the crystallized Space Spirit Jade, Pei Qiqi had changed her view towards Nie Tian.

On their way back, Pei Qiqi didn't march by herself in the forefront as she had done when they had come. Instead, she marched shoulder to shoulder with Nie Tian and Li Ye. She even swallowed her pride and joined their conversations from time to time.

The atmosphere was much more friendly than when they had come.

Under the night sky, the three of them approached the cave where Pei Qiqi's small teleportation portal was located. However, Pei Qiqi suddenly came to a stop and called out loudly, "Who's there!? Show yourself!"

Thump! Thump!

Heavy footsteps echoed out from the distant horizon. Li Ye's face instantly flickered as he blurted, "Damn it! Don't tell me we've run into a spirit beast in this shit place!"



# Chapter 238: Golden Stone Rhino

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Ever since the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in the Realm of Split Void had been tainted, most of the spirit beasts that had dwelt in different parts of the realm had begun to die by the hundreds.

The fittest survive. That rule applied to spirit beasts too. The ones that were old and young couldn't resist the erosion of the poisonous spiritual Qi and died.

However, a minority of the strongest ones survived and developed the ability to cultivate using the tainted spiritual Qi. Therefore, instead of perishing, they grew faster and stronger.

Most of them wandered in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and preyed on the human Qi warriors who dared to go on treasure hunts in the mountain range.

There were three major dangers one must face if one dared to go to the Void Illusion Mountain Range: spatial rifts that slithered about in every corner of the mountain range, raids led by enemies from the Dark Moon, Wild Fire, and Blood Skull, and the mutant spirit beasts that had survived the poisonous environment.

Thump! Thump!

The footsteps were so heavy that they obviously didn't come from a human. As the footsteps drew nearer, Nie Tian felt as if someone was pounding his chest with a drumstick.

Before he could have a chance to unleash his psychic awareness to scan the area, a gigantic spirit beast entered his sight. It was a extremely robust rhino that was about eight meters long and golden from head to tail.

“Golden Stone Rhino!” Li Ye exclaimed. The moment he caught sight of the mountain-like spirit beast, his fleshy face filled with fear.

“What’s its grade?” asked Nie Tian.

“Normally speaking, a Golden Stone Rhino is a fourth grade spirit beast, with the fighting power of a Greater Heaven stage human Qi warrior.” With a bitter smile, he continued, “However, since it has survived the harsh environment in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, it must be stronger than the Golden Stone Rhinos you can find in the other nine realms.”

Nie Tian closely examined the monster through the green light shield around him.

The Golden Stone Rhino was golden throughout its body. At first glance, it looked like it was made of solid gold, but upon closer examination, it was actually covered in skin that resembled pieces of golden rocks.

A huge horn that shone with suffocating, golden light grew out of its snout.

Nie Tian had a feeling that if he ever failed to avoid that incomparably sharp horn, he would be instantly pierced through and killed. Even his exceptionally strong body wouldn't be able to stop that.

“There's nothing sharper than a Golden Stone Rhino's horn. You'd better watch out. Don't let it get anywhere near you.” Li Ye reminded him with a soft voice as the ring of holding on his finger began to emanate a dark-red light.

In the next moment, a set of spiritual armor that had detailed patterns engraved on it flew out of Li Ye's ring of holding and rapidly wrapped itself around Li Ye's fat body.

Only until then did he let out a sigh of relief and seem to not be as anxious as before.

Then, under Nie Tian's gaze, he took out and held a talisman in one hand and a dark-red shield in the other.

He seemed to assume that now that the Golden Stone Rhino had appeared, a fierce battle had become inevitable.

However, from the way he posed, he apparently wasn't planning to rush into battle with the Golden Stone Rhino. Rather, he merely readied himself for scenarios where the Golden Stone Rhino made him its target.

At that moment, Pei Qiqi walked past the two of them and stepped towards the Golden Stone Rhino, a dangerous aura flowing out of her curvaceous body. “Get out of the way, you two!”

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Strange sounds rang out around her as she stepped forward, as if the spatial rifts that were swimming about in the vicinity were being influenced by the aura she emanated.

“Hua Tian, we just need to keep ourselves safe and stay out of my senior martial sister’s way.” With these words, Li Ye pulled Nie Tian back as the two of them hid behind a huge rock. “My senior martial sister can fully display the terrifying might of her spatial magics in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Since the energy fluctuations here are very special and violent, many spatial light blades will be formed when she casts her spells.

“Those spatial light blades might cause friendly casualties if we’re too close to them.

“Therefore, you’ve got to remember: get away from her once you see her start attacking with full force. Sometimes, she can be even more deadly than your enemies in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.”

Knowing the way his senior martial sister fought, Li Ye warned Nie Tian about both the Golden Stone Rhino and Pei Qiqi.

Nie Tian felt slightly unfulfilled. “So we just hide here and watch while she fights the Golden Stone Rhino?”

Li Ye patted Nie Tian on his shoulder and said, “Take it from me, this is the best thing to do, for her and for us. I know that you’re hot-blooded and enthusiastic. I saw that in you when we were in the mine. However, this is different. We’re not in that mine any more. We’re in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. You can’t possibly help senior martial sister with your physical strength.

“If you join her and attack the Golden Stone Rhino together, she might have to be careful and make sure that she doesn’t hurt you, so she won’t be able to go all-out.

“In light of this, we might as well observe the situation from here and act when a good opportunity presents itself or she truly needs our help.”

“Alright then,” Nie Tian said, frowning.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

The Golden Stone Rhino walked slowly toward Pei Qiqi, ferocious lights shooting out of its dark-golden pupils as its gaze became fixed on Pei Qiqi, who approached instead of running.

In its eyes, Pei Qiqi was nothing more than a piece of tasty, fresh meat, the kind it had consumed over and over again in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Without any warning, four Ethereal Swords flew out of Pei Qiqi's ring of holding and pierced towards the Golden Stone Rhino.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, they penetrated the Golden Stone Rhino's rock-like skin and created four small bloody holes. Blood instantly flowed out of them.

ROOOOOOAR!

Under the excruciating pain, the Golden Stone Rhino roared as it charged madly towards Pei Qiqi.

The Ethereal Swords immediately pulled themselves out from the Golden Stone Rhino's body before soaring through the air in a circle and piercing into it once again.

Nie Tian noticed that during Pei Qiqi's fight against the Golden Stone Rhino, her Ethereal Swords didn't vanish and pop up the way they had before.

It seemed that she didn't attach much importance to the Golden Stone Rhino, since it was only a fourth grade spirit beast, whose intelligence was far inferior to humans. She didn't think it was

necessary to use her sophisticated spells to conceal the traces of her Ethereal Swords.

She also seemed to know that most spirit beasts that wandered in the Void Illusion Mountain Range didn't think human Qi warriors were strong enough to inflict much damage to them, according to their past experiences, so they wouldn't even dodge.

That was what the Golden Stone Rhino had done.

Since the Golden Stone Rhino's skin was very tough, the Ethereal Swords only left a handful of shallow holes. None of them had pierced through its flesh and into its vital organs.

This meant that the Golden Stone Rhino's body was so much tougher than human Qi warriors at its level that the Ethereal Swords didn't even cause any serious damage.

WHOOSH!

An energy wall that was visible to the naked eye suddenly appeared right in front of the bolting Golden Stone Rhino.

BANG!

In the next moment, the Golden Stone Rhino crashed into it, and its mountain-like body's tremendous momentum was stopped.

“Spatial Bulwark!” Nie Tian’s expression flickered as he was amazed by the scene. Only then was he convinced that Pei Qiqi could indeed display her terrifying fighting prowess in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Then, he noticed that Pei Qiqi had shifted into an area where numerous spatial rifts were slithering about in the air.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

The spatial rifts moved irregularly in the air. Nie Tian couldn’t see a pattern to their movements.

He was certain that if he or Li Ye were that close to those spatial rifts, they would very likely fail to avoid them and get cut in half upon contact with them.

However, Pei Qiqi, who was an expert in spatial spells, could easily figure out the pattern they moved in. From the way her curvaceous figure flashed about in between the spatial rifts, it seemed that she was completely unaffected by them.

ROOOOOOAR!

The muddleheaded Golden Stone Rhino recovered from the collision and once again charged towards Pei Qiqi.

However, even though it had been roaming in the Void Illusion Mountain Range its whole life, hesitation could be seen in its eyes



when it was about to enter the area filled with slithering spatial rifts.

It seemed to know that any contact with those spatial rifts would be enough to cut it in two, so it suddenly stopped its dashing momentum.

It bellowed at Pei Qiqi, who was shifting among the spatial rifts, to express its anger and discontentment, but it just didn't dare to take another step forward.

Without saying a word, Pei Qiqi stared coldly at it, waiting for it to barge into the area she was in.

After groaning for a short while, the Golden Stone Rhino realized that Pei Qiqi wasn't going to come out of the area. Then, it suddenly turned around and charged towards Nie Tian and Li Ye.

After all, Pei Qiqi, Nie Tian, and Li Ye were all meat in its eyes.

Now that this piece of meat was so hard to get, why not go and get the other two, especially when one of them seemed very soft and juicy.

“Oh crap! This damn beast!” Li Ye called out.

## Chapter 239: A Monster in the Void Illusion Mountain Range

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“Can’t you two hide a little further away?” Frowning, Pei Qiqi lifted her jade-like arm, and another Spatial Bulwark appeared in the Golden Stone Rhino’s way.

BANG!

The Golden Stone Rhino rammed into it and its mountain-like body came to a stop.

It turned its head back and bellowed at Pei Qiqi, heaven-shattering rage filling its cry.

Pei Qiqi didn’t have any expression on her face as her slender figure flashed out of the spatial rift-filled area.

She waved at the Golden Stone Rhino, letting it know that she was its opponent and provoking it to attack her again.

“Well, Hua Tian, we should have gotten a little further away from them.” Embarrassment could be seen on Li Ye’s face as he dragged Nie Tian and backed away. “But you can rest assured. Although the Golden Stone Rhino is as powerful as a Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior, my senior martial sister is more formidable here.

“The Void Illusion Mountain Range is my senior martial sister’s Blessed Land. Whoever dares to fight her here is bound to die, human or spirit beast.

“Not long ago, she even single-handedly dealt with and killed a few dozen experts from the Wild Fire and Dark Moon here. Three of them were at the Greater Heaven stage, but even still, my senior martial sister lured them to a place where the spatial rifts were violent and killed them all.”

Li Ye told Nie Tian stories of Pei Qiqi’s prowess as he dragged Nie Tian away from the Golden Stone Rhino.

As they pulled back, Nie Tian occasionally looked over his shoulder to check on the battle between Pei Qiqi and the Golden Stone Rhino, and saw numerous spatial light blades appearing out of nowhere, filling the air around Pei Qiqi.

Each and every one of them was forged with her own power. Although they weren’t as sharp as the Ethereal Swords, there were so many of them.

Nearly a hundred spatial light blades bombarded on the Golden Stone Rhino like a shoal of blood-thirsty fish.

A series of clashing sounds rang out as golden sparks were sent flying from the contact points. Numerous fine cuts were created on the Golden Stone Rhino’s body, and blood was flowing out of them.

However, none of the wounds were deep enough to endanger its life. It was still brimming with life force and energy, and Pei Qiqi's attacks only made the Golden Stone Rhino fume with rage.

Therefore, the Golden Stone Rhino sudden turned around and once again lunged towards Pei Qiqi, who had already stepped out of the region where numerous spatial rifts slithered about.

Nie Tian, who was now observing from afar, saw the great amounts of spinning light blades and couldn't help but marvel, "Spatial light blades..."

At that moment, he finally understood why Li Ye had told him that them joining the fight would neither benefit Pei Qiqi nor themselves.

The current Pei Qiqi was like a monster that was summoning the surging spatial energy in the Void Illusion Mountain Range to launch attacks.

Her spatial magics allowed her to display more battle prowess than someone at her cultivation level should have.

If she ever ran into enemies that were significantly stronger than she was, she could always hide in areas where spatial rifts were densely-packed and active, so that her enemies could never get her, as long as they weren't experts in spatial magics.

Any person or spirit beast that dared to step amongst the violent

spatial rifts would either end up sliced into pieces or fall into one of the spatial rifts.

Most of the spatial rifts led to unexplored desolate lands. Withering away in a place where there wasn't a single sign of life could be even worse than being killed on the spot.

ROOOOOOAR!

The Golden Stone Rhino roared as its attempts to approach Pei Qiqi were repeatedly frustrated by her Spatial Bulwarks.

However, her spatial light blades and Ethereal Swords never stopped cutting open more wounds all over the Golden Stone Rhino's body.

It seemed that Pei Qiqi wasn't in a hurry at all; she was intentionally taking her time with this gigantic beast, as she knew that if she continued to deplete it, it would eventually collapse due to exhaustion and blood loss.

“Wow, senior martial sister is getting better and better.” Li Ye couldn't help but gasp in admiration. “She has always fought spirit beasts head-on before, and despised avoiding them. That was why she always sustained some injuries and expended a great deal of energy, even when she won.

“Now that she's attained perfection in her fighting skills, powerful spirit beasts like this Golden Stone Rhino can't even get

close to her. As long as she doesn't make a mistake, she'll soon be able to wear down this monster, which has a higher cultivation level than she does.

“Even though it takes a little longer this way, at least she won't get hurt or consume too much of her strength.

“This is the optimal way for her to fight in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. This is great. We don't even need to fear coming to the Void Illusion Mountain Range in the future in the slightest. As long as there are no mishaps, no one will be able to touch us.”

While Li Ye went on and on about the awesomeness of his senior martial sister, the berserk Golden Stone Rhino began to move increasingly stiffly because of the massive blood loss.

Just as Li Ye had expected, the Golden Stone Rhino, which was strong enough to rip any Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior to shreds, failed to even get close enough to Pei Qiqi to attack her.

About fifteen minutes later, the Golden Stone Rhino finally lost its fierceness and grew weak. After realizing the unfavorable situation, it rapidly turned around and attempted to flee.

At that moment, Pei Qiqi finally launched her killing move by commanding the Ethereal Swords to pierce into the softest part of the Golden Stone Rhino, its neck, while it was focused solely on running.

BOOM!

Its enormous body immediately crashed heavily to the ground.

“Okay, you two can come out now,” Pei Qiqi called out to them.

“I knew she’d be able to kill it. Hahaha!” Li Ye was overjoyed as he finally had the courage to return where Pei Qiqi was standing along with Nie Tian.

By the time the two of them got to the Golden Stone Rhino’s side, Nie Tian discovered that Pei Qiqi had already cut off its horn with one of her Ethereal Swords and was just about to skin it.

It was known that the most valuable parts of a Golden Stone Rhino were its horn and armor-like skin.

“Well...” Nie Tian hesitated for a moment before he said, “Can you leave its meat and blood to me?”

As she was skillfully skinning the beast, Pei Qiqi stared blankly at him for a second before saying, “Spirit beasts in the Realm of Split Void cultivate with tainted spiritual Qi, which makes their flesh and blood full of impurities that human Qi warriors can’t process. Surely, they’re powerful, but no one has ever wanted their flesh or blood. What do you need them for?”

“Impurities...” Nie Tian seemed somewhat hesitant.

The Blood Sect's Blood Refining Incantation allowed him to refine spirit beast blood and turn it into pure power.

He was also certain that he could use spirit beast meat to strengthen his bones, nourish his muscles, and temper his meridians.

Since a fourth grade spirit beast was rather hard to find in the Realm of Flame Heaven, he was planning to use its meat and blood to enhance himself.

However, Pei Qiqi's words made him vacillate.

"If you don't need them, can you just give them to me?" Nie Tian asked. "I might be able to put them to use."

"Alright," Pei Qiqi replied in a clean-cut manner.



## Chapter 240: Great Fortune!

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They didn't have any other encounters on their way back to Shatter City, and they arrived home at sunset.

In their residence...

Li Ye had many wooden shelves in his spacious room, on which numerous scrolls regarding equipment forging were placed, along with a number of bizzare-looking spiritual materials.

This was the first time that Nie Tian had visited Li Ye's room.

"Alright. Let's divide our plunder," Li Ye said, smiling.

Nie Tian nodded before taking all the Space Spirit Jades he had mined out of his bracelet of holding and placing them on the floor.

There were 320 of them. According to their original agreement, Nie Tian should split them three ways with Pei Qiqi and Li Ye.

However, now that he had given the crystallized Space Spirit Jade away to Pei Qiqi, Pei Qiqi had agreed to give up her share of the Space Spirit Jades.

Therefore, he counted out 110 Space Spirit Jades and separated them from the rest before giving Li Ye a look, showing that they belonged to Li Ye now.

Li Ye didn't say any pleasantries. Instead, he laughed broadly as he put them away.

He had only mined a few dozen Space Spirit Jades himself, but by bringing Nie Tian with them, he had almost tripled his gains, which was far more than he had expected.

Thus, he was in a very good mood.

Afterwards, Nie Tian took out three bracelets of holding and one ring of holding, which belonged to Yang Ling and three other Wild Fire members.

Pei Qiqi had already cracked the restrictive spell on the ring using her spatial magics on their way back to Shatter City.

Nie Tian sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into the ring of holding and summoned out every spiritual material within it.

One item after another, all the valuable belongings that he had looted from the three other Wild Fire members also flew out of the three bracelets of holding.

It wasn't long before numerous spiritual materials were piled up in Li Ye's spacious room.

Standing off to the side, Pei Qiqi didn't show a shred of

impatience as she watched Nie Tian go through all the items.

After all, she had changed the way she saw Nie Tian after what they had gone through together in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, along with the fact that Nie Tian had readily given the crystallized Space Spirit Jade to her. That was why she was willing to take on the responsibility to help Nie Tian trade in materials for himself.

Upon seeing that it was going to take Nie Tian some time to sort through the numerous items, she took the initiative to crouch down and help him with them.

She shot a glance at Li Ye, who was fondling a Space Spirit Jade with a foolish smile on his face, before blurting, “Come here and help us.”

“Alright.” Li Ye put the jade down and joined them.

After a short while, the three of them had sorted and counted everything from within the ring of holding and three bracelets of holding.

Altogether, there were 1,200 spirit stones, five spirit jades, fifty pieces of fire-attributed spiritual materials that were similar to Flame Crystals, and six wood-attributed spiritual materials.

There were also 16 bottles of medicinal pills, most of which were healing medicines, with only a couple serving the purpose of

restoring flesh power and psychic power.

Nie Tian only kept the flesh power and psychic power-restoring pills for himself and put the others in a different pile.

Other than the spiritual materials and medicinal pills, there were about a dozen spiritual incantations. However, none of them were very advanced, so they were of little value to Nie Tian.

There were also three sets of Medium grade spiritual armor and six Medium grade spiritual tools.

Since each and every one of them required a certain cultivation attribute to utilize, they were of no use to Nie Tian.

Looking at the pile of items that Nie Tian had set aside, Pei Qiqi said, “Keep what you need and give the rest to me. I’ll sell them for you and return the spirit stones I get to you in a few days.”

“1,200 spirit stones and five spirit jades...” Nie Tian’s eyes shone with excitement as he stared at the spirit stones and spirit jades.

Although he hadn’t been holding on to his last spirit stone before he had gone to the Void Illusion Mountain Range with Li Ye and Pei Qiqi, he had been in need of more spirit stones.

Other than the three spirit jades that Hua Mu had left him, which he would only use to help himself break through into the Heaven stage, he didn’t have enough spirit stones to cultivate with.

There were only three months left in his identity medallion. Once that time ran up, he would be immediately thrown out of Shatter City by members of the Blood Skull.

He had never imagined that their trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range would turn out to be so fruitful.

The spirit stones and spirit jades he had obtained from killing the four experts alone were enough to last him a long time in Shatter City.

Let alone the spiritual armor, spell scrolls, and spiritual tools, which could also be traded for a substantial amount of spirit stones.

He had a feeling that this trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range had completely turned his unfavorable situation around.

Seeing that Nie Tian seemed to be daydreaming, Pei Qiqi grew somewhat impatient and couldn't help but urge, "Alright, pick up the pace and separate what you're keeping from what you aren't."

"Okay, okay." With a broad smile on his face, Nie Tian rapidly put away the spirit stones, spirit jades, a few bottles of medicinal pills, and spiritual materials that had fire and wood attributes. Then, he shoved the rest to Pei Qiqi, along with the three bracelets of holding.

Yang Ling's ring of holding, which now only had the Golden Stone Rhino's skinned body inside, was quite precious. Considering his current cultivation base, he didn't plan to wear it for the time being. Therefore, he decided to put it away, in case an occasion might come up where he could use it.

He assumed that he wouldn't make much use of the extra bracelets of holding, so he handed them to Pei Qiqi as well.

"This is it?" Pei Qiqi asked.

Nie Tian nodded and said, "Thank you for going through all the trouble to do this for me."

"Yeah." Pei Qiqi didn't say much, but went ahead and stored everything that Nie Tian presented to her into the three bracelets of holding. Then, she said, "According to my estimation, I believe these things are worth about 5,000 spirit stones, more or less."

Nie Tian's expression flickered.

"I'll come back to you in seven days and bring you your spirit stones," said Pei Qiqi.

Just as Nie Tian was about to express his gratitude again, Pei Qiqi added, "Do you need any special spiritual materials or things that you need in your cultivation? If there's anything you need, I can use the spirit stones I get from selling this stuff to buy them for you."

Nie Tian pondered for a moment and said, “If that’s the case, then please find me some spiritual materials with fire and wood attributes. If you can find spiritual materials that contain star power, buy me some of those, too. Many thanks!”

“Star power?” Shock could be seen in Pei Qiqi’s eyes as she spoke after going blank for a brief moment, “It’s easy to find spiritual materials with the fire and wood attributes in Shatter City. However, spiritual materials that contain star power are very rare here. People can only find very few occasionally falling out of spatial rifts in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“So not only will it be hard to find them, but their price will also be rather high.

“Well... for the sake of the crystallized Space Spirit Jade, I’ll do my best to search for them, but I can’t guarantee that I’ll be able to find them for you.”

Nie Tian nodded. “I understand.”

At that moment, Li Ye jumped in and said, “Senior martial sister, Hua Tian doesn’t know anything about spatial magics, so there’s no point for him to keep the Space Spirit Jades. Why don’t you buy them from him?”

Upon hearing his words, Nie Tian looked down at the pile of Space Spirit Jades and said to Pei Qiqi, “He’s right. I have no use for them.”

Pei Qiqi's eyebrow rose as she looked at the pile of Space Spirit Jades with a longing gaze.

Very few people had mastered spatial magics, just as there were very few spiritual materials that contained spatial energy.

The reason why she had organized this trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range was because Space Spirit Jades were essential for her, since an enormous amount were needed for her to forge spatial tools, as well as study and research spatial spell formations.

"I'll give you 3,000 spirit stones for these Space Spirit Jades." After a brief moment of hesitation, she continued, "But I don't have that many spirit stones on hand. I'll need to sell my loot from the Void Illusion Mountain Range first, and then pay you in full."

"Sure, that's not a problem," Nie Tian said with a smile.

"Good. It's settled then. I'll take all the Space Spirit Jades with me." Pei Qiqi placed her milky-white hand on the pile of Space Spirit Jades, and in the next moment, they all flew into her ring of holding.

After that, she nodded gently at Nie Tian before stepping lightly and gracefully out of Li Ye's room.

As soon as Pei Qiqi left, Li Ye patted Nie Tian's shoulder and said with a broad smile on his face, "Well...? I treat you well, don't I?"



“Hahaha, yeah, thank you!” Nie Tian replied. “Be my guest. If there’s anything you want, just go ahead and take it.”

He thought Li Ye wanted to take advantage of his good mood and ask something for himself.

Li Ye shook his head. “Hahaha, I appreciate the gesture, but I’m good. I’ve lived in Shatter City for years. Throughout the years, I’ve accumulated fortune of a sort. These things are far from enough to interest me. You just need to remember that you owe me one.”

“Okay, I’ll keep that in mind,” Nie Tian said without any hesitation.

“Good,” Li Ye said. “You can go back to your room now, and I won’t need you to work for me these days, so just focus on your cultivation.”

Nie Tian was indeed very eager to practice cultivation. He said, “Great. I’ll see you later.”

“Yeah, go. Don’t forget that you owe me one.”

# Chapter 241: Refining Beast Blood

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By the time Nie Tian returned to his own room, it was already dark.

Silence enveloped Shatter City, and all the outlaws who dwelt therein were cultivating.

Nie Tian was no exception.

He took the ring of holding he had looted from Yang Ling out from his inner coat pocket and sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into it.

In the Void Illusion Mountain Range, Pei Qiqi had skinned the Golden Stone Rhino and taken its horn. When she had learned that Nie Tian wanted its flesh and blood, she had bled it out and carved it into pieces, before storing them in the ring of holding.

Therefore, there were a dozen barrels of blood and numerous chunks of beast meat in the ring of holding.

However, they only took up one tenth of the storage room of the ring of holding.

According to Pei Qiqi, no living creature should be stored in any sort of spatial storage tool, only dead and soulless beings.

Since there wasn't any air circulation, meat could be stored in them for a very long time.

Normally speaking, rings of holding were of a higher level, so the owners would usually set up a restrictive spell to prevent others from peeking into and taking items from within them.

However, Pei Qiqi had only cracked the restrictive spell that Yang Ling had previously set up, but hadn't placed a new one for Nie Tian.

Her explanation was that once the ring of holding was snatched by others, it most likely meant that Nie Tian had been killed, and at that time, who took it and whether they could take items from within it would no longer matter to him.

"A fourth grade Golden Stone Rhino..." Nie Tian muttered to himself as he sent a wisp of his psychic power to take out one barrel of blood from the ring of holding.

An intense, bloody smell instantly filled every corner of the stone room. If someone accidentally walked in on Nie Tian, they would assume Nie Tian had just cut down a crowd of people.

Looking at the barrel of blood, Nie Tian seemed a bit hesitant as he pondered whether or not he should use the Blood Refining Incantation to refine it.

According to Pei Qiqi and Li Ye, all the spirit beasts that had

survived the harsh environment in the Realm of Split Void practiced cultivation by extracting energy from the polluted spiritual Qi.

Therefore, their blood and flesh contained impurities, making them inedible for human Qi warriors.

That was also why Pei Qiqi hadn't shown the slightest interest in the Golden Stone Rhino's body.

Nie Tian was hesitant, because he wasn't sure if he would allow the impurities into his own body by refining and absorbing essence from the Golden Stone Rhino's blood, and thus achieve results opposite to what he had intended.

On the other hand, he could already see the bottom of his spirit beast meat stockpile.

He was aware that normal food wouldn't provide him with any help regarding the refinement of his physical body.

Only food that contained copious power, like the Golden Stone Rhino's meat, would benefit his body and make him stronger and tougher.

Even in the entire Realm of Flame Heaven, a fourth grade spirit beast was extremely hard to find.

Even though his master, Wu Ji, had learned the uniqueness of his

body and wanted to provide him with the best, all he had gotten Nie Tian was second grade spirit beast meat.

“What the hell. I’ll never know if I don’t try!” After pondering for a long while, Nie Tian gritted his teeth as he slowly extended a finger and dipped it into the barrel of blood.

He closed his eyes and cast the Blood Refining Incantation.

In the next moment, the tip of his finger began to shine with a bright light, which seemed to be attracting and refining the Golden Stone Rhino’s blood.

The thick blood was gradually refined, and one wisp of pure blood essence after another converged onto Nie Tian’s finger and entered his body.

The way the Blood Refining Incantation worked was by refining a spirit beast’s blood or Blood Pills and channelling the essence into the caster’s spiritual sea.

However, since Nie Tian was different from ordinary cultivators, after practicing the incantation for a long time, he still hadn’t been able to channel the blood essence into his spiritual sea, and thus form a vortex of blood power.

That was why he had thought he wasn’t built for this incantation. However, Hua Mu had approached him later and told him that his uniqueness actually made him perfect for this

incantation.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

The blood within the barrel began to swirl, and it wasn't long before a small vortex took shape.

It seemed that the rotation that had been caused by his finger was somehow purging the blood.

Nie Tian attempted to channel the wisps of pure blood essence that had entered his finger toward his spiritual sea in his dantian, and they did follow his meridians toward his lower abdomen.

However, all of them dispersed into his blood, internal organs, and bones before they could reach his spiritual sea.

Soon, he had a feeling that a warm current was being born inside of him.

He was intoxicated by the comfortable feeling as the surge of warmth ran through his body. It felt as if he was resting in a hot spring.

He could sense that the wisps of blood essence that he had allowed into his body carried incomparably rich power.

Furthermore, he didn't have any uncomfortable sensations

during the process.

Without him knowing it, the whole barrel of blood rapidly ran dry.

Nie Tian stopped and, sitting in his original place, carefully examined his body. After a thorough examination, he didn't find anything wrong within him.

Only at that moment was he finally convinced that even though the Golden Stone Rhino's blood carried impurities, it wouldn't affect him.

Out of curiosity, he rose to his feet and looked in the mouth of the barrel. He couldn't help but gasp.

The wooden barrel wasn't completely dry; there was still something in it.

Nie Tian observed with rapt attention and saw that there was a thin layer of thick, dark-gray liquid stuck to the bottom of the barrel. Instead of a bloody smell, it reeked of a foul, disgusting smell.

"What's this?" In the next moment, Nie Tian's expression flickered as he had an epiphany: the sticky liquid was none other than the impurities within the Golden Stone Rhino's blood!

By operating the Blood Refining Incantation, he had actually

separated the impurities from the essence!

This meant that what he had allowed into his body was nothing but pure blood essence.

“Blood Refining Incantation!” At that moment, it suddenly occurred to him that the Bone Blood Demon had been able to use the Blood Refining Incantation to refine the outsiders’ blood and thus strengthen itself.

Those outsiders cultivated with demon Qi, so their blood was also different from that of the spirit beasts in the Domain of the Falling Stars.

Since the Blood Refining Incantation could be used to refine outsiders’ blood, there was no reason it couldn’t be used to refine the blood of spirit beasts in the Realm of Split Void.

After thinking it through, Nie Tian was overjoyed, and inwardly thanked Hua Mu for his accurate judgment and kind advice.

WHOOSH!

Nie Tian stored the empty barrel in his ring of holding and took out another barrel of blood.

Afterwards, he spent the night refining the Golden Stone Rhino’s blood. He was untiring and devoted the whole time.



Before he realized it, he had already refined three barrels of blood.

By the time he refined a fourth barrel of blood, the originally comfortable feeling was gradually replaced by a burning sensation in his meridians.

When the new wisps of blood essence entered his body, not only was the speed at which his blood, internal organs, and bones absorbed them significantly slower, but he also felt an increasingly heavy burden weighing on his body.

Furthermore, his heart began to race.

That was when he realized that the blood of this fourth grade Golden Stone Rhino was very different from the blood of the second grade spirit beasts he had had before.

It seemed that, considering the condition of his physical body, he couldn't go on tempering himself with more blood from the Golden Stone Rhino.

He realized that he had been pushing himself too hard.

Therefore, after the fourth barrel, he came to a stop and closed his eyes to examine his internal organs and bones with his psychic awareness.

Every time he had used his psychic awareness to examine his spiritual sea, he had always been able to get a clear view of every trivial thing within it.

However, under the gaze of his psychic awareness, his insides were somehow blurry and not detailed.

After pondering for a moment, the thought of using the power of the seven fragmentary stars in his soul entered his mind.

## Chapter 242: The Most Subtle Changes

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All of a sudden, one of the fragmentary stars in Nie Tian's soul began to shine as brightly as a diamond.

In the next moment, a wisp of starlight flew out of it and merged with a wisp of his psychic awareness.

Unlike before, the mixture, which Nie Tian referred to as a Heaven Eye, didn't fly out from within him. Instead, it sank deep into him.

The moment it roamed through his muscles, Nie Tian was able to capture the most subtle movements that were going on around it.

Via the Heaven Eye, Nie Tian discovered that his muscles were absorbing a strand of blood essence that was ten times finer than a hair.

He could see the fine muscle fibers slowly expanding and rapidly shrinking as they swallowed the strand of blood essence bit by bit.

That was something he had never experienced before.

At that moment, he was convinced that he currently had two different types of power that shared the same origin within his soul.

One was the more basic psychic power and the other was the more advanced soul power.

Using psychic power, cultivators couldn't possibly have a clear sense of the most subtle movements within their flesh. Only a vague feeling could be drawn.

However, the Heaven Eye that contained soul power from the fragmentary stars allowed Nie Tian to sense every subtle change and movement within his muscles and meridians with great clarity.

Normally speaking, only powerful experts at the Worldly realm, Profound realm, and Spirit Realm would be able to refine their psychic power and upgrade it to soul power.

Considering that he was only in the Lesser Heaven stage, it must have been the Fragmentary Star Incantation he had obtained from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace that had enabled him to possess such divine power at such an early stage.

“Fragmentary Star Incantation!” The thought of the Fragmentary Star Incantation made him suddenly realize something.

The very reason why Hua Mu had taken him to the Realm of Split Void was that he had the Fragmentary Star Incantation on him, and the Heaven Palace sect would spare no effort to get it.

According to Hua Mu, only when he had truly mastered the first and middle parts of the Fragmentary Star Incantation and merged them with his body, would he not need to fear the Heaven Palace Sect and be able to openly go to other realms.

By that time, they would no longer be able to strip the two fragmentary star marks from him.

If they wanted his fragmentary star marks, they would have to beg him to join the Heaven Palace Sect and cultivate him wholeheartedly as their core disciple.

Furthermore, at that time, he would be able to use the Flame Dragon Armor without any issues.

Once he became the core disciple of the Heaven Palace Sect, even the Flame God himself wouldn't dare to snatch the Flame Dragon Armor from him.

“It seems that I need to spend more of my time studying those two fragmentary star marks.”

That was when he realized that he had been focusing on practicing cultivation and breaking through to the next stage, and forgotten about the reason why he had come to the Realm of Split Void.

He temporarily put the thought aside and refocused on observing himself with his Heaven Eye.

His Heaven Eye roamed about inside of him and saw tens of thousands of blood essence strands that were even finer than hairs gradually disappearing into his blood, muscles, internal organs and bones, turning into pure power and nourishing his body.

As time passed, all the strands of blood essence gradually vanished, and the burning sensation went away with it.

During the whole absorbing process, he only experienced a rapid heartbeat and nothing else.

At that moment, he suddenly thought about the green aura that was coiled up in his heart, which was the embodiment of his bloodline.

Although it wasn't very thick and large, he had a feeling that it was the most fierce and powerful thing in him.

He was certain that if it had joined in the absorption of the blood essence he had channeled into his body, the essence he had refined from those four barrels of blood wouldn't be enough for it alone.

He was becoming increasingly aware that, not only was the green aura that represented his bloodline fierce and powerful, but it was also intelligent.

For example, it must know that Nie Tian's body was in need of copious amounts of blood essence to strengthen itself, and that

when his body was tough and resilient, it would also benefit a great deal from it.

Therefore, it had intentionally allowed Nie Tian's blood, muscles, internal organs, and bones to absorb the pure blood essence and temper themselves with it.

The Heaven Eye enabled Nie Tian to obtain a deeper and more thorough understanding of every part inside of him.

At that moment, he could no longer feel any strange sensations. Then, he rose to his feet and walked to the window, finding that it was already daybreak.

“Wow, I can't believe a night passed so quickly...” Nie Tian was surprised how fast time flew. He hadn't been able to get much done, but the night had already passed.

He could feel that although the blood essence had infused into his body, it would still need time to fully process and digest the power.

Hence, instead of refining more of the Golden Stone Rhino's blood, he took out a handful of spirit stones and started using their spiritual power to refine and expand his spiritual sea.

He didn't leave his room once in the following days and practiced around the clock.

As one spirit stone after another cracked after he had absorbed

the power within them, his vast and misty spiritual sea expanded quite significantly.

However, from what he could tell, he still had a long way to go before his spiritual sea could expand to its limit.

Only when it did, and he had refined every vortex in his spiritual sea, would he meet all the conditions to break through to the next stage.

Seven days later, Pei Qiqi arrived as expected.

The tunic-clad, slender Pei Qiqi had fashioned her black hair into a ponytail. The moment she entered, Nie Tian's eyes went wide, feeling as if the entire room had been lit up by her radiance.

The garments Pei Qiqi wore were ocean-blue and close-fitting, bringing out her curvaceous frame.

"It's been seven days already?" Nie Tian snapped out of his daze and muttered to himself before rising to his feet.

Pei Qiqi took a deep look at him with her eyes that were as bright as stars before saying, "It seems that you've been cultivating hard. You even forgot the time."

Nie Tian smiled and replied, "Yeah, I guess I did."



Then, Pei Qiqi bent down to place her jade-like, slender hand on the stone floor. Her knees pressed against her ample chest.

In the next moment, the precious luster that only spirit stones had filled Nie Tian's room, as numerous spirit stones flew out of Pei Qiqi's ring of holding, piling up into a small hill that took up most of the room.

The precious luster bedazzled Nie Tian, making his entire body radiate joy and satisfaction.

After all, he had never seen so many spirit stones in his life.

"I sold all the spiritual materials for you, and got 5,600 spirit stones in return. Adding in the spirit stones for the Space Spirit Jades that you've sold to me, there should be 8,600 spirit stones." Pei Qiqi rose up and took a step back. Looking at Nie Tian, who seemed to be completely mesmerized by the spirit stones, she smiled and continued, "As you requested, I spent 1,600 of those spirit stones on fire-attributed, wood-attributed, and starlight-attributed spiritual materials.

"Therefore, there are 7,000 spirit stones here in total. You can count them yourself."

With a broad laugh, Nie Tian stored the 7,000 spirit stones into his ring of holding while saying, "There's no need to do that. I trust you one hundred percent."

Since the storage room of a ring of holding was ten times larger than a bracelet of holding's, there was still plenty of room left, even after he had stored such a large amount of spirit stones in it.

“These are the fire-attributed, wood-attributed, and starlight-attributed spiritual materials that you requested.” With these words, Pei Qiqi once again bent down to place the spiritual materials on the stone floor.

As she did, her partly-revealed ample breasts seemed extremely ripe and tempting.

Nie Tian's eyes didn't focus on the spiritual materials as they should have. Rather, he couldn't resist the temptation, and glanced her chest a few times.

When Pei Qiqi raised her chin to look at him, she immediately discovered Nie Tian's gaze and yelled angrily, “What are you looking at?”

“N-nothing.” Embarrassed, Nie Tian hastily went back to putting away the spiritual materials that Pei Qiqi had placed on the floor, and no longer dared to look at her again.

Pei Qiqi gave a cold harrumph and said, “Spiritual materials with fire and wood attributes are easy to find, but spiritual materials that contain star power are extremely rare. I tried my best, but these are all that I could get. If you want to get more of them in the future, you can go check in Ash City or the Land of the Abandoned.”

“I see,” Nie Tian replied hurriedly.

Pei Qiqi had a displeased expression on her face as she said, “If you ever dare to peep at me like that again, I’ll make you suffer for doing it!”

Nie Tian put on a dry smile and didn’t say a word.

“By the way, now that you have so many spirit stones, if you want to speed up your cultivation and reach the breakthrough point as soon as possible, you can go and rent a cultivation room from the Blood Skull.” With these words, she shot a cold glance at him and stepped out of Nie Tian’s room.

Nie Tian’s expression flickered. “A room dedicated to cultivation??”

As much as he wanted to catch up to Pei Qiqi and ask her about it, she seemed to be so angry at him that she didn’t want to say another word to him.

## Chapter 243: Unfair Treatment

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After Pei Qiqi left, Nie Tian walked out of his stone room for the first time in seven days.

It was in the middle of the day.

Nie Tian looked up at the fiercely burning sun and noticed that not a single ray of sunlight was able to penetrate the protective shield and shine on Shatter City.

Standing in the courtyard, Nie Tian carefully glanced around for the first time.

There were decorative rocks, creeks, and stone bridges in the spacious courtyard.

Across from the gate of the courtyard was a seven-story stone pavilion, which was noticeably higher than the other pavilions beside it.

The stone pavilion was Pei Qiqi and Li Ye's master's residence. According to Pei Qiqi and Li Ye, their master spent most of her time practicing in secluded cultivation, and when she wasn't cultivating in her residence, she was fond of traveling to other places.

When Hua Mu had brought Nie Tian here, their master had been in her residence, but she had left Shatter City when the three of

them had gone on their exploration trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

To the left and right of the seven-story stone pavilion, two five-story stone pavilions sat on either side of the courtyard.

They were the residences of Pei Qiqi and Li Ye, their master's only two disciples.

To either side of the two five-story stone pavilions sat a few stone bungalows, each of which was very similar to Nie Tian's residence.

Standing in the middle of the courtyard, Nie Tian unleashed his psychic awareness to scan the vicinity, and discovered seven life auras other than Pei Qiqi's, Li Ye's, and his own.

According to Nie Tian's speculation, those seven people should be Pei Qiqi and Li Ye's helpers. They probably did chores for those two to get spirit stones.

With a thought, he formed a Heaven Eye with a wisp of power from the fragmentary stars in his soul, via which he began to carefully examine the seven people's life auras.

Nie Tian's expression flickered. "Five of them are at the Heaven stage, and two of them are at the Greater Heaven stage!"

He never expected that everyone who worked for Li Ye and Pei Qiqi had cultivation bases higher than his, much less that two of

them had cultivation bases higher than Pei Qiqi's.

His new findings shocked him.

Afterwards, Nie Tian walked to the five-story stone pavilion where Li Ye lived. After a loud call, he heard Li Ye rush down to the first floor and open the gate.

“Why are you here?” Li Ye's hair was messy and his face was covered in ash. It seemed that he had been working on something.

Over Li Ye's shoulder, Nie Tian saw a woman with a plump figure standing behind Li Ye. She was wearing blue garments and looking Nie Tian up and down with a measuring gaze.

Her name was Hu Han, a middle Greater Heaven stage equipment forger. She had been living in Shatter City for many years.

The fact that she was willing to lower herself and do things for Li Ye was obviously not because he had a superior cultivation base.

What she had actually set her mind on were the equipment forging skills Li Ye had learned from his master. She hoped that she would receive enlightenment while she worked for him as an assistant.

She had been working for Li Ye for a year, and thus had heard of Nie Tian.

Before Li Ye, Pei Qiqi, and Nie Tian had gone to the Void Illusion Mountain Range, she had heard Li Ye talk about Nie Tian occasionally, but he had never said a single kind word about him.

However, recently, whenever Li Ye mentioned Nie Tian, his attitude had been completely different, praising Nie Tian as a talented young man.

The change in Li Ye's attitude had made Hu Han very curious. Therefore, now that she finally got to meet Nie Tian, she couldn't help but measure him up and down. When she found out that Nie Tian was only at the Lesser Heaven stage, she grew even more curious.

Nie Tian didn't step through the door. Instead, he asked, standing at the door, "Li Ye, does the Blood Skull have rooms dedicated to cultivation?"

Li Ye went blank for a moment and said, "Yeah, they do. Why? You want to rent one for yourself? There are only a few of them, and they are very expensive.

"Considering your Lesser Heaven cultivation base, you can use the lowest-level one, the rent of which is five spirit stones for an hour.

"That's more than one hundred spirit stones for a day. It's a very fast way to spend your spirit stones."

At that moment, Li Ye suddenly seemed to come to some realization and asked, “Did senior martial sister give you your spirit stones?”

Smiling, Nie Tian nodded in reply.

“Oh, so that’s how it is,” Li Ye said. “If that’s the case, you’ll be fine. With that big of a fortune in your hands, you’ll be able to last quite some time.”

Hu Han seemed a bit surprised. “This guy wants to rent a cultivation room from the Blood Skull after making a big fortune?” After all, she still remembered that Li Ye had told her, only a few days ago, that Nie Tian had been cutting Blackbound Wood for him in order to get one spirit stone in return for several days of hard work.

She couldn’t understand how he had managed to make a great fortune in such a short time.

She had been living in Shatter City for years, and she had been working for Li Ye for quite some time. However, the spirit stones she had earned working for him were very humble, so much so that she constantly had to worry about her income and life in Shatter City.

The fact that Nie Tian had already become rich enough to rent a cultivation room from the Blood Skull made her extremely envious.



“Yeah,” Nie Tian answered. “I feel that I’m improving far too slowly, and I want to see if renting a cultivation room will change that.”

“Sure.” Li Ye wet his hands in a basin next to him and ran them through his messy hair to fix it, before turning to Hu Han and ordering, “I’ll go with him for a few hours. You take over while I’m gone.”

He didn’t wait for Hu Han to say anything and led Nie Tian away as they strode towards the Blood Skull’s headquarters.

Confusion was written all over Hu Han’s face. After all, Li Ye, who had always bossed her around, had never attached much importance to her.

However, Nie Tian was only at the Lesser Heaven stage, and didn’t know a single thing about equipment forging. It was very unlikely that he had provided Li Ye with enormous help, yet Li Ye was much warmer towards him.

Hu Han couldn’t figure out the reason.

On their way to the Blood Skull’s headquarters, Nie Tian couldn’t help but ask, “That woman seems to be at the Greater Heaven stage. Does she really work for you, just like I did?”

Li Ye held his head high as he said nonchalantly, “Yeah, so? In

Shatter City, there are so many Greater Heaven stage cultivators like her. That's nothing unusual. She knows something about equipment forging, but her methods and techniques are garbage in my eyes.

“My master won't even lay her eyes on an equipment forger like her, and neither will I.”

Li Ye's arrogance puzzled Nie Tian. “You're merely at the middle Heaven stage. What right do you have to look down on her?”

“Hahaha!” Li Ye grinned and laughed. “We equipment forgers aren't rated according to our cultivation bases. You don't understand. She learns a lot from me by working for me. Why else do you think she's insisted on staying even when I wanted her to leave?”

“What? Really?” Nie Tian was increasingly astounded.

Li Ye gave a snort and said, “Of course! There's long line of equipment forgers waiting to work for me. The second she leaves, people will come and beat down my door.”

“Wow, I didn't know you were so good!” Nie Tian said with a surprised tone.

Li Ye grew more animated as he said proudly, “I'm destined to become a Spirit Channeling grade equipment forger one day! If I'm lucky, I might be able to forge a spiritual tool that lives on long

after I'm gone! People like me are god-chosen. Wherever I go, whatever I do, I'll shine gloriously.

“As for Hu Han, she'll probably end up being a Premium grade equipment forger if she works hard enough for the rest of her life. How can she compare herself to me!?”

Li Ye talked big as the two of them walked to the gate of the Blood Skull's headquarters in Shatter City.

It held a courtyard more than ten times larger than where Nie Tian lived, within which a number of ten-story stone pavilions were scattered in several different regions.

All the guards at the main gate were Greater Heaven stage experts.

Numerous Blood Skull members and Qi warriors from Shatter City were chatting with one another as they entered and left through the main gate.

“Let's go. I'll show you to the part where the cultivation rooms are.” Li Ye dragged Nie Tian as they approached the main gate.

It seemed that all the Blood Skull guards knew Li Ye. The moment they saw him, they stepped forward to greet him with smiles on their faces.

However, Nie Tian noticed that right before they caught sight of

Li Ye, every one of them had been wearing a cold and gruesome expression.

Every time someone had wished to pass through the gate, they would examine them without giving them any face.

There was a great contrast between how they treated those people and how they treated Li Ye.

Then, as the two of them walked though the main gate, numerous fierce-looking men of Shatter City approached with warm smiles and greeted Li Ye as if they were very close.

“Lord Li!”

“Hahaha, long time no see, Lord Li!”

“How’s your master doing?”

Apparently, they knew what Li Ye liked to hear. Even though they were all much older and had higher cultivation bases than Li Ye, they called him Lord Li to flatter him.

Li Ye exchanged some pleasantries with some of them as they walked through the crowd in the courtyard.

After Li Ye and Nie Tian were gone, everyone fell into an uproar.

“Who’s that kid with him?”

“I don’t think I’ve seen him before.”

“No, I’ve never seen that kid in Shatter City before. He’s definitely not from here.”

# Chapter 244: The Blood Skull's Headquarters

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The Blood Skull's headquarters was the the largest trading center in Shatter City, where people could sell or purchase spirit stones, spiritual materials, spiritual tools, and spiritual incantation scrolls.

Those people whose identity medallion was about to run out of time could also come here to lengthen their allowed stay with spirit stones.

Other than that, the Blood Skull also had eight cultivation rooms set up in their headquarters.

They were designed for cultivators with different cultivation bases; two for each of the Lesser Heaven stage, the Heaven stage, the Greater Heaven stage, and the Worldly realm.

All the rooms were located in a four-story stone pavilion, with two on each floor. The first floor was where the Lesser Heaven stage cultivation rooms were located, and the cultivation rooms designed for Worldly realm Qi warriors were on the top floor.

The moment Li Ye led Nie Tian to the front gate of the stone pavilion, Nie Tian's ears were caught by an uproar from behind. He turned around and found that a dead body was being carried out of the stone pavilion across the street.

A number of Qi warriors were gathered in front of that stone pavilion, each of whom had a ferocious look in their eyes and a strong killing aura around them.

As soon as they saw a body was carried out of the establishment by a cold-faced member of the Blood Skull, they clamored to get inside.

Not far from them, a few Blood Skull members were sitting behind a dilapidated stone table, beckoning for people gathered around them to place their bets.

Numerous spirit stones were piling up on the stone table, which apparently were the bets being placed.

Upon seeing this scene, Nie Tian asked, “What’s going on over there?”

Li Ye followed Nie Tian’s gaze and realized what Nie Tian was looking at. Then he said, “Oh, that’s the Blood Fighting Pit. Fights are forbidden in any part of the city. Those who are in violation of this rule will be thrown out of the city, or even worse, killed on the spot by the Blood Skull.

“The Blood Fighting Pit is the only exception.

“Those who hold deep hatreds against each other can apply to fight in the Blood Fighting Pit, where they are allowed to kill their opponents.

“Of course, whoever applies to fight in the Blood Fighting Pit will have to pay the Blood Skull with spirit stones. Only when the Blood Skull are paid in full will they permit them to fight each other to death within the pit.

“Wherever there are fights, there are gamblers. The Blood Skull is the banker, and they allow anyone to take part in the gamble. If they bet on the right fighter, they will get spirit stones several times the amount they put in, but if they bet on the wrong fighter, they will lose every bit of their wager.”

While Li Ye explained, a late Heaven stage expert walked out of the Blood Fighting Pit covered in blood.

Since he was walking with his chin up and his chest out, he must have won.

The moment he walked out, all those who had placed their bets on him burst into cheers, but those who had bet against him glowered at him, as if they planned to kill him the moment he stepped out of the city.

The man didn't even clean up his wounds before he rapidly collected the spirit stones he had won and left.

Immediately afterwards, two Qi warriors who had been waiting were led into the Blood Fighting Pit by a member of the Blood Skull to start the next match.



“People die in the Blood Fighting Pit every day, don’t they?” Nie Tian asked.

“Yeah, you’re right. There are always men who can’t find better things to do than fight others to the death. Some of the fighters started their feuds in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and didn’t want to fight outside the city, since there might be others lurking in dark corners, waiting to jump in and kill whoever wins.” Li Ye’s face was filled with disgust as he explained.

“So they’ll usually choose to fight in the Blood Fighting Pit. Those kinds of people come in and die everyday.

“Let’s go. It’s nothing but a bunch of people who are strong in the back and weak in the brain winning money for the the Blood Skull. There’s nothing to see.”

Li Ye urged Nie Tian to follow him into the four-story stone pavilion.

The moment they went in, a member of the Blood Skull stepped over and said, “Wow, what brings you here, Lord Li?”

Almost every member of the Blood Skull knew him, and the fact that, rather than his own cultivation base, he was more infatuated with equipment forging.

Over the years, they had never known Li Ye to use one of the

cultivation rooms, so they were all very surprised to see him here.

“I’m not here to rent one of your cultivation rooms for myself.” Li Ye pointed to Nie Tian as he said, “He’s a friend of mine. I’d appreciate it if you can arrange a Lesser Heaven stage room for him.

“Oh, right. Hua Tian, how long do you want to rent the room?”

“Twenty hours, I think,” Nie Tian replied.

“That’s one hundred spirit stones,” The Blood Skull member said. “Why don’t you register here.”

Without saying another word, Nie Tian took one hundred spirit stones out of his bracelet of holding and handed them to the man.

“One sec.” The man put away the spirit stones and glanced down at the form in his hand, saying, “Many people are waiting in line to use those cultivation rooms. It appears that you’ll have to wait for about three days.”

Li Ye went blank for a moment before saying, “Shi Qing, even the lowest-level cultivation rooms have become so coveted recently?”

The Blood Skull member pointed at one of the Lesser Heaven cultivation rooms and said with an apologetic expression on his face, “Our miss, oh sorry, our little lord is in there.”

Li Ye's expression flickered slightly. "Since when has she become so diligent?"

Shi Qing explained, "As you probably know, the last time we Blood Skull had a battle against the Dark Moon outside Shatter City, she was hurt and felt humiliated. Since she came back, she has been devoted to practicing cultivation. She's at the late Lesser Heaven stage, and not far from her next breakthrough, so she's occupied one cultivation room recently, leaving the other one for everyone else. That's why there's a long line of people waiting."

Li Ye rubbed his fleshy, beardless chin as he said, "Oh, I see..."

Then he pointed to Nie Tian and said, "Hua Tian here is my brother. Will you do me a favor and squeeze him in?"

Shi Qing took a look at Nie Tian and after a moment of hesitation, he gave in, saying with a reluctant face, "Alright, the person who's using that room is going to finish in one hour, and so he can get in after him. However, he can only use the room for twenty hours and no longer. Otherwise, I'll be in trouble."

"Okay, okay, I understand," Li Ye said impatiently.

Then, Nie Tian and Li Ye moved to the side and waited not far from the gate of the stone pavilion.

"Who's the little lord you two talked about?" Nie Tian asked as a

way to kill time.

“She’s the daughter of the head of the Blood Skull, and she doesn’t like people treating her as a girl,” Li Ye explained. “Although, you don’t need to worry about her too much. Just try not to offend her. Otherwise, she’ll make your life in Shatter City a nightmare.”

“I see,” Nie Tian nodded.

During the short while the two of them talked beside the gate, they saw two dead bodies being carried out of the Blood Fighting Pit from across the street.

Those who won cheered loudly and rampantly, and those who lost grunted and swore, as if they itched to charge into the Blood Fighting Pit themselves and fight those who had made them lose money.

Half an hour later, a middle Lesser Heaven stage Qi warrior walked out of one of the cultivation rooms, looking radiant and perfectly satisfied.

“Alright, it’s your friend’s turn.” Shi Qing called out to Li Ye from inside the stone pavilion.

“Go ahead.” Li Ye beckoned for Nie Tian to go inside. “It’s perfectly safe here. You don’t need to worry about anything. When you’re finished, follow the same route back to our residence. As

long as you don't enter that Blood Fighting Pit, every other place in Shatter City is regulated and secure."

"Okay." After bidding farewell to Li Ye, Nie Tian followed Shi Qing into one of the cultivation rooms.

The moment he entered, he caught a whiff of the rich spiritual energy, and felt that both his body and mind were calmed. He realized that the room was indeed very suitable for practicing cultivation.

He sat down in the middle of the spacious room. After a brief examination of the air, he realized that the intensity of the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in the room was quite exceptional, although it was still far inferior to that of the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace.

Even if he only relied on the pure spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in the room, the speed at which he progressed would be several times faster than cultivating with spirit stones outside.

"This place is great!" Nie Tian said in admiration before calming himself down and beginning to channel the spiritual energy into his spiritual sea to gradually stretch its limits.

Soon, he realized that he was by far more efficient in here than in his own residence.

After a short while, he was awoken from his cultivation by a

thought; he suddenly thought of a secret magic he had learned from the mysterious land.

He had used it to condense the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth into spiritual energy balls in the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace, and then absorb the pure and refined power from them.

“It’ll probably work in this place as well.” With that thought, he reached out with one hand and cast the spell in his mind.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

In the next moment, the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth that filled every corner of the room began to flood madly into his palm from all directions.

Before long, a spiritual energy ball was created.

Without any hesitation, he channeled the half-mist, half-liquid power in the spiritual energy ball into his spiritual sea, which immediately caused the three vortexes of spiritual energy to speed up significantly and his spiritual sea to expand at a noticeable speed.

However, after all, he wasn’t in the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace or the mysterious land he had visited a handful of times before.

Furthermore, there was a limit to the spiritual Qi of Heaven and

Earth in the rooms, and it was continuously being refilled by a spell formation that had been laid under the rooms. It took time for the spell formation to convert spirit stones into spiritual Qi and channel it to the cultivation rooms.

Now that the speed at which Nie Tian was absorbing the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth had exceeded the speed it was being generated, a hidden spell formation was triggered, which connected the two Lesser Heaven stage cultivation rooms and balanced the amounts of spiritual Qi in both rooms.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

Via numerous specially-made tubes under the rooms, rich spiritual Qi rapidly flowed from the other room to Nie Tian's room.

At the same time, the spiritual Qi in the other room began to grow fainter.

All of a sudden, the daughter of the head of the Blood Skull awoke from her cultivation.

She keenly sensed the change.

## Chapter 245: Cheater

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“Why is the spiritual Qi growing fainter?” The white-garbed Cai Yue, who dressed like a young lord, awoke from her cultivation.

She was the daughter of Cai Lan, the head of the Blood Skull. She was at the late Lesser Heaven stage, only one step away from entering the Heaven stage, and the reason why she had been practicing day and night for the past week was that she hoped to make the breakthrough as soon as possible.

Not long ago, the Blood Skull had had a conflict with the Dark Moon. Cai Yue had joined the battle, but sustained injuries.

She attributed her injuries to her low cultivation base, and thus had been rather eager to improve.

She had used that cultivation room many times long before Nie Tian came along. Therefore, she knew those rooms and the intensity of the spiritual Qi in them like the back of her hand.

The sudden change disturbed her cultivation and significantly undermined the rate at which she took in spiritual energy.

She endured the change and continued to cultivate for a while. However, she discovered that not only did the intensity of the spiritual Qi in the room not recover to its original level, but it even kept deteriorating.



Cai Yue had never been known for her patience, so she put her cultivation on hold and walked out of her room.

“Little lord.” The moment she walked out, Shi Qing, administrator of the first floor, trotted to her and asked with a flattering smile on his face, “Shall we call it a day?” Shi Qing thought she had finished her cultivation for the day.

“Uncle Shi!” Face cold, Cai Yue asked with a punitive tone, “Is there something wrong with my cultivation room? Why is the spiritual Qi on the decline?”

Shi Qing stood aghast. “How can that be?!”

Cai Yue gave a cold harrumph. “You’re welcome to take a look for yourself!”

“Alright, let’s me check it out.” With these words, Shi Qing followed Cai Yue into her cultivation room. Eyes narrowed, he carefully examined the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in the room.

It took only a few second for Shi Qing to realize the anomaly. Then, he said, “I can’t believe that you’re right!”

Face filled with dissatisfaction, Cai Yue asked, “What’s going on, Uncle Shi? What’s wrong with this cultivation room? I don’t usually have such a zest for practicing cultivation. If I tell my father about this, I’m afraid he won’t let you off easily!”

Shi Qing's expression flickered as he hastily apologized to her and said, "Please hold on a second."

He stepped to the center of the room where there was a jade column. Then, he gently placed his skinny hand on it as he unleashed his psychic awareness.

A short while later, Shi Qing opened his eyes. With a strange expression on his face, he muttered, "I can't believe that the spiritual Qi is flowing to that other room..."

"Just what exactly is going on, Uncle Shi?" asked Cai Yue.

Shi Qing pondered for a while before explaining with a bitter face, "Little Lord, you should know that the two cultivation rooms on each floor are actually connected to one another. Beneath the rooms lies the spell formation that summons power from the spirit stones we put there and transmits it to the rooms.

"If the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in one room is consumed faster than the speed at which it is being replenished, a hidden spell formation will be triggered, and the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth will naturally flow over from the other room to balance out the difference."

Upon hearing these words, Cai Yue immediately realized what was happening. "So you're saying that the man in the other room is consuming the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth past the output capacity of the spell formation?"

“The spiritual Qi in his room is running so low that the spiritual Qi in my room flowed to his?”

Shi Qing had a strange expression on his face as he said, “Yes, it appears so. However, we built these two rooms to meet the ultimate speed at which Lesser Heaven stage cultivators can absorb spiritual Qi. Even cultivators at the peak of the Lesser Heaven stage couldn’t possibly absorb spiritual Qi faster than our spell formation produces it.

“This seems impossible.

“No one has ever triggered that hidden spell formation ever since it was set up.”

Shi Qing’s words intrigued Cai Yue. She asked, “Uncle Shi, are you sure that man is at the Lesser Heaven stage?”

“Of course!” Shi Qing said with a serious expression. “I examined him when he came. He’s at the late Lesser Heaven stage. I can’t be mistaken.”

Cai Yue snorted and said, “Do you know who he is? He stole the spiritual Qi that’s supposed to be mine. I won’t let him off easily!”

“He’s Li Ye’s friend,” Shi Qing said with a bitter expression.

“He’s that fatty’s friend, so what?” Cai Yue’s tone wasn’t pleasant at all. “If Li Ye dares to stop me, I’ll beat him up too!”

“Little Lord, the problem is that, technically, he hasn’t done anything wrong.” Shi Qing had a headache over the tough situation. “Even though he overconsumed the spiritual Qi, he paid for the cultivation room, so we must honor the rules. Those rules are what hold up our reign. Since he’s not in violation of them, we can’t just go in there and arrest him.”

“I don’t care!” Huffing, Cai Yue stormed out of the room in an attempt to settle things with Nie Tian.

“Don’t!” Shi Qing hastily stopped her and urged pressingly. “If you do this, others will laugh at us and take the Blood Skull as a rabble of stingy men. Listen to me, Little Lord. At least wait for him to come out of there. He only rented the room for twenty hours. As you know, if a cultivator is interrupted in the middle of his cultivation, he may very well fall into Qi deviation.”

After hearing these words, Cai Yue, who was already standing in front of Nie Tian’s cultivation room and ready to barge in, finally came to a stop and fell into silent pondering.

A moment later, Cai Yue said, “The spiritual Qi in my room is too faint, and I’m too distracted to practice cultivation. I’ll wait for him here! I’ve got to see how special this guy really is, and what made him dare to steal the spiritual Qi from my room!”

Standing beside her, Shi Qing continued to reason with her with

a bitter smile on his face. However, after a while, he found that it appeared that Cai Yue wasn't listening at all, and thus gave up.

After things were calmed, Shi Qing focused his glittering eyes on the cultivation room Nie Tian was in, his mind filled with questions.

As far as he knew, a situation like this would only happen when a middle or late Heaven stage expert used a Lesser Heaven stage cultivation room.

However, he was completely certain that Nie Tian was only at the Lesser Heaven stage. The speed at which he consumed the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth astonished him.

In Nie Tian's cultivation room.

Nie Tian condensed another spiritual energy ball using the technique he had learned from the mysterious land, and then channeled the pure spiritual energy within it to his spiritual sea.

The three vortexes of spiritual energy were rotating madly to generate more refined spiritual power and push it to the edges of his spiritual sea.

The speed at which Nie Tian advanced in the cultivation room was already much faster than when he had cultivated in his residence. Adding in the incantation that he used to form the spiritual energy balls, the speed of his advancement was further

boosted.

He had a feeling that the speed at which he improved here was approximately twenty times faster than before.

The fact that he only had to pay five spirit stones for one hour was absolutely worth it.

Originally, if he hadn't used his secret technique, the advancement in his cultivation he would achieve within one hour inside the room would be less significant than that which he could achieve cultivating with five spirit stones outside, but the time he would spend to achieve such progress would be much less.

However, using the spiritual energy ball technique, he had improved his cultivation efficiency dramatically. Therefore, the total amount of spiritual energy he absorbed within one hour turned out to be far greater than what he would have been able to obtain using five spirit stones outside.

Seeing that his spiritual sea was expanding rapidly, Nie Tian was rather pleased. He went on to form more spiritual energy balls and devoted himself to absorbing the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

Meanwhile, the numerous spirit stones that had been laid under the floor of the two Lesser Heaven stage cultivation rooms rapidly ran dry and turned into rubble.

Time passed quickly.

As time passed, the amount of spiritual Qi left in both rooms grew thin, and then, Nie Tian suddenly woke from his cultivation, since he was no longer able to form another spiritual energy ball with the thin amount of spiritual Qi.

Confusion stretched across Nie Tian's face. "What's happening to the room?"

At the same time, grim expressions could be seen on the faces of Shi Qing and Cai Yue, who had been waiting for Nie Tian to come out of the room.

A member of the Blood Skull, who was responsible for filling the spell formation with spirit stones, approached Shi Qing and whispered in his ear, "Sir, the 350 spirit stones we've laid under the first floor cultivation rooms have already run dry.

"300 of them were consumed after that person went into one of the rooms.

"The speed at which the spirit stones were consumed was even faster than we could refill the spell formation with new ones. Should we keep refilling?"

Shi Qing frowned as he waved his hand and said, "No!"

Cai Yue stamped with fury as she said, "Even I can only consume 50 spirit stones by cultivating for 24 hours within one of the

rooms! That guy has only been in there for 12 hours, but he has already consumed 300 spirit stones!

“Uncle Shi, how many spirit stones did he pay?”

“100 spirit stones for twenty hours,” replied Shi Qing.

“I suspect that he intentionally hid his true cultivation base in order to take advantage of us!” Cai Yue blurted furiously.

Just as she was about to break into the room and demand an explanation from Nie Tian, Nie Tian walked out of the room.

He didn't look at Cai Yue. Instead, he gazed at Shi Qing, and with a puzzled look in his eyes, he asked, “The twenty hours' time isn't up yet, right? Why is there not a bit of spiritual Qi in the room already? Don't tell me that the Blood Skull's cultivation rooms are usually like this, breaking down from time to time.”

Upon hearing these words, Shi Qing's face suddenly twitched.



## Chapter 246: Practicing in the Next Level

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Face grim, Shi Qing frowned and didn't know what to say.

After all, Nie Tian had used the room for twelve hours and hadn't broken any rules.

However, in only twelve hours, he managed to cost them 300 spirit stones, while he only paid 100.

That meant that not only did the Blood Skull not make a profit from him, but they even suffered a great loss from their deal with him.

Technically, Nie Tian was entitled to use the room for another eight hours, but if they let Nie Tian to do so, they would probably lose 200 more spirit stones.

As the administrator, Shi Qing would have to make up for the loss himself if he couldn't come up with a better way to recover it.

While searching his mind for a plan, Shi Qing got a thorough measure of Nie Tian.

Shi Qing was a Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior, far stronger than Nie Tian. Hence, he could easily see through Nie Tian's cultivation base.

After a thorough examination, he concluded that Nie Tian was indeed in the Lesser Heaven stage, and he still had a long way to go to enter the Heaven stage.

Therefore, Nie Tian hadn't broken any rule that Cai Lan, the head of the Blood Skull, had set.

Because of that, Shi Qing had quite a headache.

"So you're the guy," Cai Yue said angrily. She, who was unhappy with Nie Tian, never expected that he would blame the lack of spiritual Qi on the Blood Skull's facility the moment he stepped out of the room.

Nie Tian was surprised and asked, "You are?"

Only then did he take note of Cai Yue. With a single glance at her, he realized that the fine-looking girl, who was dressed like a boy, must be the daughter of the Blood Skull's head that Li Ye had warned him about.

According to Li Ye, this girl was spoiled and had a bad temper. He should avoid offending her.

"I was in the room next to yours!" Cai Yue gave a cold harrumph. "Because you overconsumed the spiritual Qi in your room, a hidden spell formation was triggered, which channeled the spiritual Qi from my room to yours! You undermined my cultivation. What do you have to say about it?"

Nie Tian was quite confused, since he had no idea about the spell formation Cai Yue was referring to. He shot a confused glance towards Shi Qing.

With a stern face, Shi Qing explained to Nie Tian, “What she said is true. I don’t know what cultivating method you used, but you drained the spiritual Qi in both rooms surprisingly quickly. In merely twelve hours, you cost us 300 spirit stones. As you probably already know, the Blood Skull doesn’t do business without a profit. So what do you suggest we do?”

Cai Yue glared at Nie Tian as if she was demanding that he provide a proper solution.

Nie Tian forced a smile as he touched his head, knowing that it was the secret magic that he had used to create spiritual energy balls that had caused all this.

Although he was glad that he had made great progress with his cultivation, he didn’t want to offend the Blood Skull and Cai Yue because of it.

After all, whoever Li Ye tried his best to avoid offending must be a huge pain in the neck.

Therefore, after a moment of hesitation, Nie Tian said, “How about this: I’ll compensate you for your loss.”

Shi Qing smiled and said, “You’re a smart man. No wonder Li Ye attached such importance to you.”

Nie Tian’s proposition was acceptable to him, since as long as the loss was recovered, there wouldn’t be a problem for him when he reported to his superior.

Without any delay, Nie Tian took 300 spirit stones from his bracelet of holding and handed them to Shi Qing. “Here.” Then, he asked, “Oh, right, what’s the rate for a Heaven stage cultivation room?”

After receiving the spirit stones from Nie Tian, Shi Qing assumed a much better attitude. Smiling, he replied, “A Heaven stage cultivation room? 25 spirit stones for an hour. The spiritual Qi in those rooms is much richer. If you think that a Lesser Heaven stage cultivation room didn’t satisfy your needs, you’re welcome to rent a Heaven stage cultivation room.”

After pausing for a moment, he continued, “Also, it’s been a long time since someone rented the rooms on the second floor. You can rent one of them for a long term if you like. Of course, that’s assuming that you have the spirit stones to do so.”

“That’s not a problem.” Having a substantial amount of spirit stones in his possession, Nie Tian became a generous consumer. He took out 500 spirit stones and handed them to Shi Qing while saying, “Put me down for twenty hours, starting now.”

“No problem!” A broad smile could be seen on Shi Qing’s face as

he trotted to his desk and registered Nie Tian.

At that moment, two cultivators walked in through the main gate of the establishment and one powerful expert came down the stairs after his cultivation.

The three of them overheard Nie Tian and Shi Qing's conversation, and with surprised expressions, they began to look Nie Tian up and down with measuring gazes.

They obviously found it strange that a Lesser Heaven stage cultivator would waste his money on a Heaven stage cultivation room.

Since the three of them didn't know what had happened early on, they all considered Nie Tian to be a spendthrift, who was parading his wealth by spending five times more than he should on a cultivation room he wouldn't need.

The two people who had just entered the building exchanged a subtle look after getting their measure of Nie Tian.

“He's a friend of Li Ye's.”

“It's like what people say, he who has wealth speaks louder than others.”

“But his cultivation base doesn't seem very impressive.”

The two of them had been living in Shatter City for a long time, and they had extensive connections with the outlaws outside the city.

Nie Tian, who had an unimpressive cultivation base and great fortune, had just become their next easy target.

They secretly memorized Nie Tian's face, as they were determined to tail him and kill him the instant he walked out of Shatter City.

Seeing that Nie Tian was quite sensible and offered to compensate them for their loss, Cai Yue suppressed her anger. "What's your name?"

"Hua Tian," Nie Tian answered.

"What's your relationship with that fatty, Li Ye?" She asked.

"Well, I do things for him, like cutting spiritual material and stuff," Nie Tian said.

Cai Yue went blank for a moment before subconsciously looking at Shi Qing and asking, "Since when has it become so lucrative to work for Li Ye? Is Li Ye that generous with his helpers?"

Shi Qing shook his head. "Li Ye is a canny man."

“If it’s all settled, do you mind if I go upstairs and start my cultivation?” Nie Tian asked.

Shi Qing nodded. “Sure, I’ll take you to your room.”

That said, he told the others to wait for him and led Nie Tian to the second floor. After arriving at the door of a cultivation room, he took out a specially-made key and opened the door.

Right before Nie Tian followed Shi Qing into the room, Cai Yue gave a snort and, looking up at him from the first floor, she said, “I’ll let you off today only on account of you being friends with Li Ye, but you’ve got to be more careful. If I catch you ripping us off again, I’ll make you suffer for it!”

“I see.” With a calm face, Nie Tian walked into the cultivation room.

Although the size of the room was approximately the same as the one on the first floor, Nie Tian could clearly feel that the spiritual Qi in this room was far richer.

It was still not as rich as the spiritual Qi in the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace, but it was almost at the same level as the spiritual Qi in the mysterious land that the Blood Core had led him to.

It wasn’t safe for him to use the Blood Core to enter the

mysterious land and cultivate in Shatter City. Too many eyes might be watching from dark corners.

He might be able to do it in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, since there were a large number of spatial rifts there and the spatial energy in the area was already rather unstable. It would be hard for others to notice the change.

“I’d better consider cultivating somewhere else, especially when I need to cultivate my star power and ready myself for my next breakthrough.”

With those thoughts, Nie Tian sat down cross-legged and cleared his mind as he began to refine his spiritual sea.

Time passed quickly.

Before he noticed it, he had already spent twenty hours in the Heaven stage cultivation room.

As a result, he had expanded his spiritual sea to the limit of the Lesser Heaven stage.

It was when he felt the spiritual Qi suddenly grow faint that he realized that his time was up.

He wasn’t in a hurry to walk out of the room.



Instead, he took some spirit beast jerky out of his bracelet of holding and washed them down with large gulps of water. Only after that did he step out of the room and approach Shi Qing.

This time, he took out 1,000 spirit stones and rented the Heaven stage room for another forty hours.

Shi Qing received the spirit stones and had his assistant ready the room for Nie Tian. Then, Nie Tian went in and started cultivating painstakingly again.

The speed at which the spell formation underneath the room generated new spiritual Qi was fast enough for him to cultivate with his spiritual energy ball technique. With that method, he progressed rapidly.

Since his spiritual sea had expanded to the fullest, he used the three vortexes of spiritual energy to refine and purify the spiritual energy round after round.

After his time was up, he didn't choose to leave.

Rather, he paid more spirit stones to continue cultivating devotedly in the room. Whenever he was hungry, he would eat spirit beast meat from his bracelet of holding, and whenever he was thirsty, he would drink water.

Time flew. Before he knew it, he had already thrown in 3,000 spirit stones, and he had finished refining his spiritual sea three

times.

But even still, there wasn't any sign that he was going to break into the Heaven stage.

Only at that moment did he realize that he might have to refine his vortexes of flame power, wood power, and star power to a certain extent to reach the breakthrough point.

In order to do that, he would need spiritual materials with those three attributes. Spending more time in the cultivation room wouldn't be of much help.

Therefore, when his time ran out again, he didn't extend his usage of the room with Shi Qing.

Instead, he handed him 500 spirit stones and asked him to extend his stay in Shatter City. Afterwards, he decided to return to his residence.

Standing right outside the establishment was a skinny, middle-aged man with a goatee. He approached Nie Tian with a flattering smile and said, "Hey, little friend. It seems that you've spent quite some time in there. Can I interest you in the latest news?"

Nie Tian knew that there was a group of people in Shatter City who made their living by selling news and information.

He measured the man up and down and said, "I'm good if you

only have news about Shatter City or the Realm of Split Void.”

“So what do you want to know about?” The man asked.

“The Realm of Flame Heaven,” Nie Tian said.

The man reached out with one hand. “News just came in about the Realm of Flame Heaven. Ten spirit stones and I’ll tell you all about it.”

Without a second thought, Nie Tian handed him ten spirit stones.

The man grabbed the spirit stones with a swift motion and began gushing over the latest events that had taken place in the Realm of Flame Heaven. “Alright. A great spatial rift opened in the Realm of Flame Heaven, and demon Qi keeps coming out of it.

“The Heaven Palace Sect from the Realm of Mystic Heaven sent people to the Realm of Flame Heaven in search of a man named Nie Tian. Even with the seven sects in the Realm of Flame Heaven to help them, they failed to find him.

“The Flame God Sect from the Realm of Dark Underworld was also looking for that man. They searched every corner of the Realm of Flame Heaven and found nothing.

“I heard that the man they’re after is merely at the Lesser Heaven stage. I don’t understand why those two sects attach such great

importance to him.

“Also, at the Heaven Palace Sect’s behest, the Realm of Dark Underworld and the Realm of Earth Sieve have put their operations against the Realm of Flame Heaven on hold.

“It seems that they all know that if they can’t find a way to seal the spatial rift soon, the Realm of Flame Heaven will fall in only a few decades.”

The man poured out everything he had learned about the Realm of Flame Heaven.

Eyebrows furrowed, Nie Tian asked, “Since they couldn’t find Nie Tian, did they vent their anger on his relatives or friends?”

The man shook his head. “Not that I know of. Supposedly, that Nie Tian person has two powerful masters in the Realm of Flame Heaven; one is Wu Ji from the Cloudsoaring Sect, and the other is Li Jing from the Blood Sect.

“With those two to shelter his relatives and friends, nothing happened to them.”

“I see. Thanks.” After hearing the information he was expecting to hear, Nie Tian secretly let out a sigh of relief and left without asking any more about the Realm of Flame Heaven.

# Chapter 247: Three Attributes

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Ever since Nie Tian had returned from the Blood Skull's headquarters, he cultivated wholeheartedly in his room.

Instead of using spirit stones, he used spiritual materials that contained flame power and wood power.

Two weeks passed.

As Nie Tian channeled flame power to his vortex of flame power, he could see increasingly clearly that numerous tiny flames were being formed at the bottom of the vortex.

It was like a miniature sea of flames, within which lay formidable flame power.

However, a moment later, he noticed that when he continued to channel more flame power to the vortex, no more flames were formed.

That was when he realized that he had refined his vortex of flame power to its limit.

Therefore, he went on to absorb essence from the peculiar wood chips and green leaves that Pei Qiqi had obtained for him.

As he channeled more and more wood power to his vortex of

wood power, a small pond of green liquid was formed at the bottom of the vortex, which was the concentrated essence of plants and vegetation.

Two months later, he discovered that the liquid seemed to reach the brim and stopped growing.

That was when he realized that he had finished refining his vortex of wood power.

After that, he took out a handful of strange-looking stones that contained a faint amount of star power, and channeled the power into his vortex of star power.

There had already been a tiny pond of liquidized star power, which he referred to as stardew, at the bottom of his vortex of star power. He had formed it by cultivating in the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace and the Blood Sect.

It only took him three days to absorb the star power from those few pieces of spiritual materials, and as a result, a few drops of stardew were added to the bottom of his vortex of star power.

However, he could feel that it was far from enough to fill his vortex of star power to the point where he was ready to make the breakthrough into the Heaven stage.

Spiritual materials that contained star power were rather rare. Even with Pei Qiqi's special status, she had merely managed to get

him a handful of them.

Without more of those spiritual materials, there was only one way for him to obtain more star power: use the Fragmentary Star Incantation to channel starlight to his spiritual sea in an open space.

However, the entire Shatter City was enveloped by a giant light shield. Polluted spiritual Qi couldn't penetrate it, and neither could starlight.

That meant that as long as he was in Shatter City, he couldn't channel starlight from the heavens to the vortex of star power in his spiritual sea.

One day, Nie Tian awoke from his cultivation. He sat by his window and stared deep into the night sky, lost in his thoughts.

The spiritual power in his spiritual sea was in a misty state, but the essence at the bottom of the vortexes of three different attributes was obviously more condensed.

He had a feeling that the spiritual power in his spiritual sea was the foundation that he had built his cultivation on.

Without it, he wouldn't have a spiritual sea, and none of the vortexes of different attributes would exist.

Every time he made a small breakthrough in the Lesser Heaven

stage, a new vortex of spiritual power was formed in his spiritual sea.

The three vortexes of spiritual power unceasingly refined spiritual power and tempered his spiritual sea. However, his spiritual sea also required his other vortexes to develop to the point where it was ready to upgrade and he was ready to enter the next cultivation stage.

That meant that the more types of power he cultivated, the longer it would take to advance to that point.

If he had only cultivated flame power, he would have reached the breakthrough point long ago.

Given the right enlightenment, he would have made the breakthrough much more smoothly.

Cultivators had limited lifespans, and could only obtain more when they broke through into a new stage or realm.

Even cultivators who were as powerful as Wu Ji and Hua Mu could only let out useless sighs as their lifespan ran out while they weren't anywhere near entering the next realm.

That was also why the major sects usually admitted disciples with clear cultivation attributes, since they would be able to rapidly advance in their cultivation stages, and thus stay ahead of their lifespan.



As for Nie Tian, since he possessed a unique bloodline power, his lifespan would surpass normal cultivators by a great margin.

Therefore, even though he was cultivating three different types of power simultaneously, his exceptionally long lifespan would allow him to go rather far down this cultivation path.

However, it didn't mean that he could afford to waste his time, so he had no other options but to leave Shatter City now that he had used up the spiritual materials that contained star power.

At that moment, it occurred to him that Pei Qiqi had a small teleportation portal set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

He was aware that the tainted spiritual Qi would be a great danger if he wished to travel to the Void Illusion Mountain Range. However, he had a solution in mind.

He had been able to keep the demon Qi away with his chaotic magnetic field while he had fought in the Blood Sect and Ghost Sect.

Therefore, he had reason to believe that he would be able to apply the same method in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and remain safe without using Li Ye's jade bracelet.

He quickly made up his mind.

At first light the following day, he went to Li Ye's pavilion.

“Wow, it's been a long time, Hua Tian.” Exhaustion could be seen on Li Ye's face as it appeared as if he hadn't slept for days. “I've spent the past few days forging a piece of spiritual equipment, but for some unknown reason, my attempts have failed over and over again. Dammit!”

“I want to go to the Void Illusion Mountain Range again.” Nie Tian went ahead and expressed his intentions.

Li Ye rubbed his bloodshot eyes and asked with a shocked expression on his face, “Why? Are you running out of spirit stones? It can't be. The spirit stones you obtained from our last trip were more than enough to last you years, even if you used them to rent cultivation rooms from the Blood Skull. Plus, you should know that not every trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range will turn out to be productive. You've got to understand that we got lucky last time, and we had my senior martial sister there to guide and protect us.

“For now, she has sufficient Space Spirit Jades to support her work, and I heard that she's been working on a teleportation formation. I'm afraid that she won't have the time to go to the Void Illusion Mountain Range with you.”

“As for me, I'm quite busy with equipment forging...”

Nie Tian didn't wait for Li Ye to finish before saying, “I want to go by myself. I only came here to ask you if I can use Miss Pei's

teleportation portal, so that I won't have to take a long journey to the Void Illusion Mountain Range."

Li Ye's expression flickered. "You want to go by yourself? Are you crazy!? You're only at the Lesser Heaven stage. Don't you get the false impression that you can defeat a Greater Heaven stage expert in a real fight only because you killed Yang Ling! Last time was different. If it hadn't been for the unique limitations of that mine, you wouldn't have stood a chance against him!"

"I understand." Nie Tian nodded gently and said with a serious tone. "I'm not going to the Void Illusion Mountain Range to hunt spirit beasts or explore spatial rifts. I'm only going because I need to leave here to practice my special incantations. I'll mind my own business and try my best to steer clear of powerful experts."

"Alright then, I won't stop you if you insist on going." Li Ye nodded. "Give me 100 spirit stones, 50 for the Blood Skull and 50 for my senior martial sister. Give me a minute to freshen up and I'll go with you in a bit. However, there's one thing you must remember: don't expose the location of my senior martial sister's teleportation portal in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

"If anyone learns about its location, the Dark Moon and Wild Fire might soon discover and destroy it. It would take an enormous amount of time and effort to build another one."

"You can rest assured," Nie Tian said. "I'm only using it to travel back and forth. I won't stay in that region for too long."

“Oh, right. I have a map for you. There’s a place you can go which has been fully explored and determined futile long ago. There aren’t any spirit beasts or active spatial rifts in that region, so very few people would want to go there.”

Li Ye explained further as he washed his face and fixed his hair. “Also, it’s not very far from the teleportation portal. You should be fine there if you can keep a low profile. One more thing: be quick about it. if you stay there for too long, trouble might find you anyways.”

“Alright.”

## Chapter 248: Leaving the City

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After cleaning himself up, Li Ye prepared to take Nie Tian to the inter-spatial teleportation portal in the central square. Just as they were about to depart, Hu Han appeared.

“Oh, you’re here,” Li Ye said. “I’m going to arrange for Hua Tian’s trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range. I’ll be back soon.”

“The Void Illusion Mountain Range?” Hu Han seemed surprised as she looked at Nie Tian, her eyes wide. “He’s only at the Lesser Heaven stage. I’m afraid that he’ll be murdered before he can get there.”

Li Ye snorted and said, “He’ll teleport to the heart of the Void Illusion Mountain Range, instead of taking a long journey to get there.”

Upon hearing those words, Hu Han’s eyes lit up, and she said with a pleading tone, “Lord Li, I’ve worked for you for more than a year. I’m recently a bit short of spirit stones, so I’d like to go with him and try my luck in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Plus, his cultivation base is too low. Even if he doesn’t have to travel on foot to get there, it will still be dangerous for him to stay there alone. I can look after him for you.”

Although Hu Han had assisted Li Ye with equipment forging for a long time, he had never been warm to her.

From what she could tell, Li Ye had never considered her as one

of his own. She was also aware that Pei Qiqi, who was an expert in spatial magics, had set up a small teleportation portal in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Originally, only the Dark Moon, Wild Fire, and Blood Skull had the skills and resources to set up teleportation portals in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

They had never allowed others to set up new ones in the mountain range.

And they only allowed their own members and those who were attached to them to use the portals.

Pei Qiqi was one of the very few who was both capable and respected enough to have their own portals set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Hu Han had long since overheard that Pei Qiqi had established a small scale teleportation portal in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, but Pei Qiqi had never allowed others to use it, only Li Ye and herself.

Therefore, when she learned that Li Ye was going to let Nie Tian use the portal, she thought that she might be able to take advantage of the opportunity and tag along.

“You want to go too?” Li Ye frowned.

Hu Han nodded repeatedly and said, “Don’t you worry. I’ll never reveal the location of the portal to others, and I’ll even pay for the trip. Furthermore, if you allow me to go with Hua Tian. I’ll keep an eye on him while we’re there. Should any danger come up, I’ll do my utmost to protect him.”

Li Ye pondered in silence.

As a matter of fact, neither Nie Tian nor Hu Han understood why he had attached so much importance to Nie Tian that he had been willing to vouch for him and include him on their trip to the secret mine.

The major reason was that Nie Tian had been brought to them by Hua Mu, and Hua Mu was sworn friends with his master. He even had a feeling that there was a great deal of mystery between the two of them.

That made Nie Tian different from the others.

After pondering for a while, Li Ye took out a dark-green medicinal pill from within his ring of holding and held it out to Hu Han. “There’s no need for you to pay. If you really want to go, take this Heart Crushing Pill. You probably already know how it works. If you take it, I’ll allow you to go with Hua Tian.”

The moment she saw the pill, Hu Han’s expression flickered drastically.

She seemed torn with indecision as she asked, “When will you give me the antidote?”

“When the two of you come back.” Li Ye said with no expression.

Hu Han clenched her jaw as she grabbed the pill. Then, after a deep breath, she swallowed it and said, “Okay now?”

Li Ye emphasized, “Remember to keep Hua Tian safe. If he doesn’t return with you, you won’t get the antidote.”

Hu Han gave a bitter smile and nodded in assent.

“Don’t think ill of me. I just like to be on the safe side. Your cultivation base is way higher than his, and it’s not like you’re in Shatter City. I’d never know if you somehow decided to kill him in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.” Li Ye was blunt with his intentions. “You’re right. You’ve worked for me for more than a year, but I can’t say I know you well. No decent and honest person would come live in the Realm of Split Void. Plus, I’ve heard stories about you.”

Hu Han’s face grew grim as she said, “I see. I knew you wouldn’t trust someone like me.”

Li Ye turned to her and said, “You go ahead and wait for us at the teleportation portal. We’ll be there shortly.”

Hu Han didn’t say another word and walked out of the room.



Li Ye waited for her to disappear from his sight, then snorted and said to Nie Tian, “Watch out for this woman, Hua Tian. I’ve heard about some of the stuff that she’s done. She’s not a simple person. If it weren’t for the fact that she had agreed to take one of my Heart Crushing Pills, I wouldn’t have let her go with you. She can’t do anything to you while you’re in Shatter City, but it’s hard to say when you leave the city.”

“Are you afraid that she’ll kill me?” Nie Tian sounded surprised.

“I can’t rule out that possibility if she hadn’t taken the Heart Crushing Pill,” Li Ye replied. “You’ve got to remember that there isn’t a single person in the Realm of Split Void who doesn’t have a complicated past, especially a woman like her.”

“Oh, but why do you think you can trust me?” Nie Tian was curious.

“Because Mr. Hua brought you here, and his relationship with my master...” Li Ye didn’t finish his sentence. “Umm... You’re no outsider to me. Let’s just leave it at that. Come on, time to go.”

A short while later, Nie Tian and Li Ye arrived at the grand inter-spatial teleportation portal in the central square of Shatter City, where Hu Han had already been waiting.

On their way to the square, Li Ye had given Nie Tian some advice, along with a green jade bracelet and a map, on which a safe route had been marked out for him.

After Li Ye handed a number of spirit stones to Liu Kang, the Blood Skull member who managed the portal, he beckoned for Nie Tian and Hu Han to step into the portal.

Seconds later, the spell formation was activated, and Nie Tian and Hu Han disappeared in a cluster of blindingly bright light.

In the next moment, the two of them appeared in the small teleportation portal Pei Qiqi had set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

After switching to another environment, Hu Han suddenly became much more talkative. She shot a glance at Nie Tian and said, “I’ve never seen Li Ye behaving so friendly toward anyone.”

Nie Tian smiled and said, “I’m only here to practice cultivation. I have no interest in exploring. The region I’m going to has long since been fully explored. Therefore, there won’t be any strong spirit beasts or explorers in that region.”

“Okay, I see.” Hu Han looked deeply at him, as if she wanted to see through what was special about him. However, the young man in front of her seemed every bit as ordinary as any other.

She couldn’t figure out why Li Ye, who had a high opinion of himself, would attach such importance to Nie Tian.

Hu Han took out a hollow, diamond-shaped stone and handed it

to Nie Tian, saying, “Here, take this Sound Stone. You can use it to communicate with me as long as we’re within five kilometers of each other. But if we’re any further apart, they’ll stop working. I’ll try my best to remain within that distance from you while I explore. Should you encounter any trouble, use it to call me, and I’ll be there as soon as I can.”

Nie Tian grabbed the Sound Stone and held it close to his mouth. As soon as he whispered into it, he heard his voice coming out of the Sound Stone in Hu Han’s pocket.

“Remember, be safe.” Hu Han said with a straight face. “If you die, no matter how, I’ll suffer the same fate.”

“Of course!” Nie Tian said, smiling. “I didn’t come here to die. I like living.”

Just as Hu Han was about to turn around and leave, she hesitated. After a moment of pondering, she said, “Forget it. I’ll escort you to the place you’re going to first, in case something happens to you on your way there.”

“Alright,” Nie Tian said.

Then, Nie Tian put on the green jade bracelet. When he was enveloped by a green power shield, he walked out of the cave with Hu Han.

Right before Hu Han stepped out of the cave, a faint red light

shield surrounded her, keeping the poisonous spiritual Qi away.

After Nie Tian showed Hu Han the route on the map, Hu Han led the way for Nie Tian. From time to time, she would unleash her psychic awareness to scan the vicinity, and lead Nie Tian away as soon as they saw any spatial rifts.

The two of them marched cautiously through the Void Illusion Mountain Range. After all, unlike Pei Qiqi, neither of them had mastered any secret magics. They had to be extra careful to steer clear of spatial rifts and spirit beasts.

It took them six full hours to arrive at the the place Li Ye had marked out for Nie Tian on the map.

“This is it. I just checked. As Li Ye said, there isn’t any sign of life in this area. You’ll be safe here.” After escorting Nie Tian to his destination, Hu Han only said a few words, then rapidly left the place.

It was already deep into the night.

Numerous stars were shining brightly in the sky.

Nie Tian was so eager to refine his vortex of star power with the starlight that he didn’t even take surveillance before rapidly finding a spot and starting to use the Fragmentary Star Incantation to channel starlight from the sky.

# Chapter 249: Some Rejoice While Others Gloom

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Deep in the night, in a remote corner of the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Nie Tian was sitting cross-legged, using the secret magic he had learned from the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation to channel star power from the heavens into the vortex of star power in his spiritual sea, and condense that power into stardew.

Meanwhile, a Heaven Eye hung high in the sky, scanning the vicinity for signs of movement, in case spirit beasts or Qi warriors entered the area.

As numerous streams of star power began to continuously penetrate the green light shield and converge on him, he had a feeling that it seemed that he didn't need to focus solely on the spell to continue the process. Therefore, he spared some attention to study the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

As soon as he sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into one of the hexagrams on his chest, he saw a large number of ancient symbols lined up in perfect order.

“Huh?!” With a single glance, he noticed that the record about the method to channel star power from the heavens was no longer there.

At that moment, he suddenly received a flash of enlightenment; whenever he fully grasped a magic or spell from the Fragmentary Star Incantation, the part that recorded the magic or spell would disappear.

Then, it occurred to him that Hua Mu used to tell him that by the time he had refined those two fragmentary star marks, he wouldn't have anything to fear, and would be able to openly return to his home.

He hadn't truly understood what he had meant, but now he did.

By the time he had mastered every spell and magic in the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation, every magical symbol in the hexagram that carried the mysteries of the incantation would disappear.

That would be when he had truly merged the incantation with himself.

With these thoughts in mind, he commanded his psychic awareness to move on to the following spell.

He soon realized that aside from the starlight channeling spell, there were three other spells recorded in the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

They were Starstrike, Starshift, and Starfall.

Starstrike was a powerful attacking spell. Starshift was a spell that would allow him to teleport from one position to another, while Starfall was a spell he could use to change the course of shooting stars from outer space and redirect them to bombard his enemies.

The power source of all three of them resided in the stardew in the vortex of star power.

He only used his psychic awareness to briefly scan the three spells and learn their unique traits, but didn't actually learn how to cast them.

“What's in the middle part?” With that thought in Nie Tian's mind, a wisp of his psychic awareness flew into the other fragmentary star mark on his chest to learn what mysterious magics were recorded in it.

As he did, he already had a feeling that his psychic power was quickly running low.

That was when he realized that by only using his psychic power to briefly examine the ancient symbols and learn what spells were recorded in the Fragmentary Star Incantation, he had consumed a large proportion of his psychic power.

However, he was determined to check what magical spells were written in the middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

It was at that very moment that the seven stars in his soul suddenly began to shine brightly.

Numerous wisps of soul power floated out from within the stars and joined his psychic power before they entered the hexagram together.

Nie Tian immediately came to a realization, “It’s forcing me to use my soul power! I’m forced to summon power from the fragmentary stars to read the middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation!”

Then, he only briefly scanned the spells that were recorded in the hexagram before retracting the mixture of his psychic power and soul power.

The significant consumption of psychic power made him feel depleted and muddle-headed.

Because of that, the efficiency of his channeling of the starlight from the heavens was also undermined. The speed at which he refined star power into stardew declined substantially.

However, thanks to the brief scan, he had already learned what spells were recorded in the middle part of the incantation.

They were all spells regarding cultivating soul power and using



soul power to attack, defend, or communicate with spirits in spiritual souls.

As a matter of fact, his eyes had been caught by one of the spells: Starchain. However, just as he was about to learn what it was about, he was struck by a sudden rush of exhaustion, and felt that even his pure soul power wasn't capable of giving him more time.

“The first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation is about channeling star power into the spiritual sea, forming a vortex of star power, condensing stardew, and using star power to cast spells.

“The middle part of the incantation is about cultivating soul power and using it to cast mysterious spells.”

His brief examination allowed him to have an overall idea of the first and middle parts of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

He also realized that his priority was to learn every spell and technique recorded within them.

Every time he fully mastered one spell, the symbols that carried the spell would disappear from within the fragmentary star marks.

By the time there wasn't a single symbol left in the two hexagram marks, it would mean that every spell and technique they carried had been engraved in his mind and had become a part of him.

Therefore, even if the Heaven Palace Sect somehow found him, they wouldn't be able to strip the incantation from him.

At the same time, in the Realm of Flame Heaven...

On top of a high mountain peak outside the Hell Sect, Ning Yang from the Heaven Palace Sect had a grim expression on his face after being awoken from his cultivation. Frustration could be seen in his eyes as he stared at the pervading demon Qi in front of him. Low in spirit, he asked, "You're here. Any word?"

Standing beside him, Su Lin's long, white garments fluttered in the wind. Adding in the chilly moonlight, she looked like a female immortal that had just descended from the moon.

Su Lin stepped closer to Ning Yang and shook her head. "No. We have every sect in the Realm of Flame Heaven searching for Nie Tian for us, but there's still no news regarding his whereabouts. I even sent out a number of our sect members to ask for his information. They all came back empty-handed.

"It's almost as if this Nie Tian person has vanished into thin air."

Ning Yang let out a sigh and said, "We can't find him, which means that we can't return to our sect. My martial uncle sent people to inform me that the spatial rift near our sect is also leaking demon Qi day and night.

"If this goes on, it won't be even ten years before we will be

forced to move our sect.”

Su Lin pondered in silence for a moment before asking, “Have you learned the profound knowledge in your fragmentary star mark?”

Upon hearing these words, a sinister expression appeared on Ning Yang’s handsome face.

He grunted like a trapped beast, and vigorously smashed his fist onto the stone ground next to him.

CRACKLE! CRACKLE!

Sizable cracks extended in the solid stone ground up to a hundred meters away.

Numerous huge rocks rolled down the mountaintop and fell to the bottom of the valley. It took a long time for the rumbling sounds to stop.

“In order to study the knowledge in the fragmentary star mark, I’ve already used up the star power that I obtained in the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace. But all that I’ve seen...” Ning Yang paused to take a deep breath. Then, he shook his head and said, “I can’t see very clearly, but I’m certain that the final part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation is about entering and cultivating in the three domains!”

Su Lin's expression flickered. "What?! That means only the ultimate experts who are in the Void Domain, the Saint Domain, and the God Domain will be able to learn and use it?"

Ning Yang nodded in frustration and said with a hateful tone, "This damn incantation must be practiced step by step. Only by mastering the first and middle parts of it will I be able to learn the method to channel star power and cultivate my soul. And only when these are accomplished, and I reach the peak of the Soul realm, will I be able to use the method in my part of the incantation to cultivate!"

"Without knowing how to channel star power and develop soul power, I can't even get a good understanding of the method, much less use it!

After realizing what had happened, Su Lin looked him in the eye and consoled, "Don't worry, martial uncle. We'll find that Nie Tian person soon, and you'll have his two fragmentary star marks. Then, you'll be able to start with the first part of the incantation and learn the whole thing."

With these words, Su Lin said with an envious expression on her face, "Only the mysterious Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace, which has vanished for centuries, has divine methods of cultivating in the Void Domain, the Saint Domain, and the God Domain. Even our sect doesn't have them, and so we are merely groping in the dark."

"What I fear the most is that Nie Tian might master the knowledge in his two fragmentary star marks before we can find

him.” Ning Yang’s face was very grim. “By that time, even our sectmaster won’t have the ability to strip those two fragmentary star marks from him.

“If his fragmentary star marks have become a part of him while I can’t even study mine, I’ll be forced to give mine up to him!”

Those thoughts made Ning Yang fume with anger.

Upon hearing his words, Su Lin’s face also grew long. She said, “I’ll send some of our people to search in the other realms of the Domain of the Falling Stars.”

As soon as she uttered these words, Su Lin turned around and left.

After she disappeared from his sight, Ning Yang finally broke. He threw his head back and roared Nie Tian’s name before smashing the mountaintop into stone pieces.

# Chapter 250: The World Is An Evil Place

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In the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

In a secluded valley, roughly a dozen log cabins were scattered on both sides of a creek. It was the base of the Dark Moon, garrisoned by a dozen of their members year-round.

The three major forces, the Dark Moon, the Wild Fire, and the Blood Skull, had all set up inter-spatial teleportation portals in the depths of the Void Illusion Mountain Range, so that they could teleport directly from their city to the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

None of them had ever stopped exploring the Void Illusion Mountain Range. They all wished to discover new dimensions and make great fortunes from them.

That was why the three forces had set up bases in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and only provided support to their own members.

In the Dark Moon's base...

It had been days since Hu Han had parted with Nie Tian. She hadn't explored within a five kilometer range from Nie Tian as she had promised. Instead, she had shown up here.

As soon as Hu Han entered the base, she approached a Dark

Moon Qi warrior and demanded, “I want to see Lord Ma Jiu.”

The man looked Hu Han up and down with a measuring gaze and then said, “Follow me.”

A while later, the man led Hu Han to the largest log cabin, inside of which there was also a small teleportation portal that could only be used to travel within the Realm of Split Void.

A burly, one-eyed man was sitting next to the teleportation portal. Barefoot and dressed in a sackcloth, he was lolling in a chair.

The moment Hu Han walked through the gate, she bowed to the burly man and asked with an anxious expression on her face, “Lord Ma Jiu, how’s my brother?”

Ma Jiu’s eyes shone with bone-piercing light as he took out a metal box from within his ring of holding and tossed it toward Hu Han.

Hu Han caught the metal box with trembling hands and slowly opened it. With a single glance at what was inside, her eyes welled up.

There was a human finger in the box.

“A finger from your brother’s hand, as we agreed.” Ma Jiu sounded indifferent. “You’ve worked for Li Ye for more than a year

now, yet you haven't gotten any of the valuable information we want. Considering your poor performance, we had to do this, although I didn't want to."

Hu Han's shoulders trembled slightly as she seemed to be bowing her head and weeping. However, she didn't make a sound.

Only after a short while did she recover and look up at Ma Jiu, as if she had something to say.

At that moment, Ma Jiu said coldly, "It's one finger on your first year. If you fail again on your second year, I'm afraid I'll have to take two fingers. As you know, losing one finger already has a pretty big influence on a Qi warrior. If he loses three fingers, I fear he won't be able to cast many advanced spells."

After hearing Ma Jiu's words, Hu Han sounded as if she was on the verge of breaking down as she said, "Lord Ma Jiu, I-I came here via the teleportation portal that Pei Qiqi set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Li Ye forced me to take a Heart Crushing Pill. If you can find an antidote for me, I'll gladly tell you the location of the teleportation portal."

Ma Jiu's eyes lit up, as it seemed that he had finally heard something interesting. "The antidote to a Heart Crushing Pill is rather hard to find, but we'll manage. Good job there. Although, it's a pity that you didn't show up earlier with that piece of information. Otherwise, you would have saved your brother's finger."



Hu Han's body shook as she said, "Is this piece of information enough for you to free my brother?"

Ma Jiu shook his head. "No, not enough."

Hu Han hesitated for a brief moment, then decided to betray Nie Tian. "There's another man I came here with, a man very important to Li Ye. He's only at the Lesser Heaven stage, but he's got quite a fortune with him. I bet if we can capture him, we can use him to threaten Li Ye to give us things or information."

"Okay." Ma Jiu didn't seem thrilled at all. "It's worth a shot. What we can get from Li Ye through that man will determine how we'll treat your brother from now on. You know that, right?"

"I understand," Hu Han said with a grim expression.

Ma Jiu slowly rose to his feet and said, "Now, give me the location of the teleportation portal. When I find it, I'll make a few alterations to its spell formation and make it ours. And you, go get that Lesser Heaven stage person you talked about and bring him here."

"Sure." Hu Han obeyed his order.

In the middle of the day, at the location where Nie Tian was cultivating...

BOOM!

Nie Tian's fist was wreathed with blazing flames as it smashed vigorously onto a huge rock.

The rock cracked upon impact, with numerous tiny flames splashing out from the contact point.

Eight days had passed since he had parted with Hu Han...

During this time, he had spent his nights channeling starlight from the heavens and converging the power into stardew.

During the day, since the stars had faded away, his efficiency of absorbing star power declined significantly. Therefore, he would spend the day cultivating the Flame Spirit Incantation and studying its attacking techniques and spells.

The reason why he hadn't practiced the Starstrike spell was that he would have to use the stardew in his vortex of star power to cast it.

He had been stuck in the Lesser Heaven stage for a long time. If he wished to make a breakthrough soon, he had to try his best to save the star power, instead of spending it.

After all, only when he had stockpiled enough stardew, would he be able to fulfill the prerequisite to make a breakthrough.

After cultivating for eight whole days, he had a feeling that he had almost filled the stardew to the limit.

He had been careful to make sure not to use any of it. Otherwise, it might jeopardize his progress.

During this time, he hadn't encountered any spirit beasts, unstable spatial rifts, or human explorers.

He was very glad that he had been able to cultivate wholeheartedly.

However, things always happened without any forewarning. While he was absorbing star power one night, the Heaven Eye he had deployed to scan the perimeter detected two life auras.

He frowned as he awoke from his cultivation and silently paid attention to the movements of those two life auras.

It wasn't long before two bedraggled Qi warriors, who looked very much like beggars, entered his sight.

At first glance, the two of them seemed to be roughly at the same cultivation stage as Nie Tian. One was at the late Lesser Heaven stage, and the other was at the early Heaven stage. Both of them belonged at the bottom of the food chain in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

The two of them had searched in the Void Illusion Mountain

Range for three months already. Not only did they not find anything valuable, but they had even used up their spirit stones, and had just barely escaped from an area filled with slithering spatial rifts.

Since they had already run out of spirit stones, they couldn't afford to use their spiritual power to form shields to keep the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth away.

Therefore, both of them had impurities running in their veins, making their muscles hurt from time to time. If they couldn't find spirit stones soon and use them to cleanse themselves, they would be in serious trouble.

The early Heaven stage cultivator caught sight of Nie Tian and exclaimed, "I can't believe that there are people here!"

He took a deep look at Nie Tian before giving a fake chuckle. He approached Nie Tian while saying, "Little brother, can we borrow a few spirit stones? We've spent three months in the Void Illusion Mountain Range already, and have run out of spirit stones. Please, we'll never forget your kindness."

"My name is Qiu Shan, and this is my brother, Qiu Shi. We're from Ash City." He kept walking toward Nie Tian as he introduced themselves. Right when he was eight meters from Nie Tian, a killing aura shot out of his eyes as he suddenly dashed toward Nie Tian.

In the next moment, dark-golden sand shot out from his palm.

Along with bright lights, they rushed towards Nie Tian.

The sand seemed as hot as a soldering iron, and had strong penetrating power.

Nie Tian, on the other hand, remained in his original location. He placed his hands in front of his chest, palms facing each other as he channeled a different type of power from within him. Immediately afterward, a small chaotic magnetic field was created.

It only covered a one meter range with him as the center.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

As soon as the current-like sand entered the magnetic field, it became distorted and broken before falling to the ground in the next moment.

At the same time, Qiu Shan had already reached Nie Tian's side. He laughed sinisterly as he swung a golden staff down toward Nie Tian's head.

As the golden staff whizzed down, it emanated the bright light of gold-attributed spiritual power.

However, it was only a brief moment before all the lights faded away, since, at that moment, Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field had already extended to a three-meter radius and enveloped the staff.

When the golden staff grew dim in the magnetic field, Qiu Shan seemed to have taken a strong blow, as blood began to continuously flow out of the corner of his mouth.

“You must have a death wish!” Nie Tian raised his left hand and curled it into a fist that resembled a huge hammer as he cast the Flame Hammer spell.

In the next moment, Nie Tian’s flame-wreathed hand smashed into Qiu Shan’s head like a blacksmith’s hammer.

With the formidable might of the Flame Hammer and his inhuman strength, he actually managed to sink Qiu Shan’s head into his own chest.

He died before he could even make a sound.

Upon seeing his brother’s death, Qiu Shi didn’t hesitate in the slightest, and turned around and ran.

“Go!” Nie Tian splayed his blazing fist, and a few slender flames shot towards Qiu Shi like fiery snakes.

At the same time, Nie Tian bolted after him as well.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

The moment the three fiery snakes pierced into Qiu Shi's back, he began to stumble.

Within seconds, Nie Tian caught up to him and drove his blazing fist into his back, killing him on the spot.

“Li Ye was right,” Nie Tian muttered to himself. “There indeed isn't a single honest person in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Then, he examined the two brothers' bodies, but failed to find a single valuable item. All he found were three low-grade spiritual tools, which made him somewhat disappointed.

In the following days, Nie Tian concentrated on cultivation.

After his battle with the Qiu brothers, he was convinced that his speculation was right: his chaotic magnetic field could indeed protect him from the poisonous spiritual Qi.

Not only that, the impurities would be stripped away from tainted the spiritual Qi and added to the might of his magnetic field as a new type of power, leaving the purified spiritual Qi usable to Nie Tian.

However, compared to the spiritual energy in spirit stones, that spiritual Qi was rather faint, and therefore unworthy to cultivate with.

Soon, night fell...

Sitting cross-legged under the starlit sky, Nie Tian suddenly felt that he could no longer channel star power from the heavens.

That was when he realized that his vortex of star power was already brimming with stardew.

He became aware that he was now only one step away from entering the Heaven stage.

Just at that moment, the Heaven Eye that had been floating high above him detected a battle going on not far from him.

After a moment of pondering, he rose to his feet and marched over.



# Chapter 251: Bloody Battles

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In Shatter City...

In the middle of the night, Li Ye threw his head back and laughed uproariously in his room, holding a short, silver spear in his hand.

Everyone in a 50-meter radius was awoken from their cultivation, and they immediately cursed Li Ye for his neurotic behavior.

In a nearby spacious stone room, Pei Qiqi was wholeheartedly engraving a detailed spiritual formation drawing onto a beautiful piece of jade when she was startled by Li Ye's yell, making her finger shake.

CRUNCH!

The Space Spirit Jade in her hand cracked open.

Rage immediately appeared on Pei Qiqi's delicate face as she dashed out of her room as lightly as a puff of air.

In about ten seconds, she appeared in front of Li Ye like a ghost. Without saying a word, she punched him in the face before he could react.

BOOM!

Li Ye's body was immediately sent flying backwards before crashing heavily onto the ground.

"What the hell are you doing, senior martial sister?!" Li Ye sat up and asked bitterly, holding his swollen face in his hands.

"I wanted to ask you the same question!" Pei Qiqi said angrily.

"What? Did I disturb you?" With these words, Li Ye seemed to have come to some realization, and hastily forced a smile on his face, saying, "I finally finished the short, silver spear for Hu Han. I just ran a series of tests, and it's proven to be a Premium grade spiritual tool. Hahaha!

"I'm a Premium grade equipment forger from now on!" Complacent with himself, Li Ye grew increasingly animated.

Pei Qiqi's eyebrows furrowed as she said, "Hu Han? I told you to drive her away long ago. That woman has ulterior motives. Why don't you listen to me?"

A forced smile could be seen on Li Ye's face as he said, "I couldn't. After all, she knows something about equipment forging, and can help me with my work. None of the other ones know a damn thing about equipment forging, including Hua Tian. None of them are helpful, not in the slightest. Don't tell me you want me to count on them."

“Hua Tian...” Upon hearing Nie Tian’s name, Pei Qiqi suddenly realized that it had been awhile since she’d seen him. Therefore, she asked, “Is that guy still in the Blood Skull’s headquarters?”

“Nope, he went to the Void Illusion Mountain Range,” Li Ye said.

Pei Qiqi’s expression flickered slightly. “The Void Illusion Mountain Range?! How did he get there?”

“Via the teleportation portal you set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.” Li Ye chuckled, as if he was quite proud of his intelligence. “He’s Mr. Hua’s nephew, and Mr. Hua personally brought him here. That makes him one of us. Hey, by the way, have you noticed that every time our master talks about Mr. Hua, her expression changes? I bet he and our master...”

Pei Qiqi gave Li Ye a cold look as she blurted, “The fact that Mr. Hua personally put him in our hands is exactly the reason why we should guarantee his safety! I can’t believe you actually let him go to the Void Illusion Mountain Range by himself! Are you aware that he’s only at the Lesser Heaven stage, and letting him roam about in the Void Illusion Mountain Range by himself will get him killed?”

“Do you really think he can single-handedly defeat a powerful expert like Yang Ling in the Void Illusion Mountain Range?”

“You moron!”

Pei Qiqi's scolding made Li Ye cower. He laughed embarrassedly and said, "I know that, and that's why I arranged for Hu Han to go with him. Also, I forced Hu Han to take a Heart Crushing Pill before departing. Rest assured, considering her status, she won't be able to get an antidote on her own. She'll play by the rules and take care of Nie Tian for me."

"What?!" Pei Qiqi seemed astounded as she stared at Li Ye as if she were staring at a fool. "You let Hu Han go with him?! Haven't you ever suspected why she's been working for you?"

"What do you mean?" Li Ye was puzzled.

Pei Qiqi didn't answer. Instead, she asked with a heavy tone, "How long have they been gone?"

"About ten days." At this point, Li Ye also had the feeling that something bad might be going on. He put away his smiles and asked, with all seriousness, "What do you know, senior martial sister?"

"Ten days... I hope it's not too late..." Pei Qiqi muttered before striding out of Li Ye's room.

When she disappeared from Li Ye's confused gaze, her voice echoed out, "You stay here, and don't you dare leave Shatter City before I come back! We'll talk then!"

At the same time, a wave of mysterious spatial energy spread out.

After a short while, she appeared by the inter-spatial teleportation portal in the central square. She told Liu Kang that she needed to use the portal immediately.

Without any hesitation, Liu Kang made the arrangements for her.

SHEW!

In the next moment, Pei Qiqi showed up in the small teleportation portal she had set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

She rapidly glanced around, and then let out a sigh of relief after being convinced that nothing had happened to it.

Then, she reached out and placed her hand on the portal as she cast a spell in her mind.

The portal rapidly shrank to the size of a palm, and she put it away effortlessly.

Afterwards, she stepped out of the cave and marched quickly among the slithering spatial rifts.

She shifted skillfully among the spatial rifts as she rapidly closed in on the location that Li Ye had pointed out for her.

Meanwhile, Ma Jiu, along with a handful of his subordinates, were marching towards Pei Qiqi's teleportation portal according to the directions Hu Han had provided.

Ma Jiu's sharp eyes caught sight of Pei Qiqi, who was shifting among the spatial rifts under the chilly moonlight. "Miss Pei."

Pei Qiqi's expression flickered slightly. "Ma Jiu!"

Ma Jiu seemed as if he had just discovered an unexpected prize. "Wow, I didn't expect to run into you here. This is good!" He raised his left hand and called out to his men, "Go get her, dead or alive!"

Upon hearing his order, the Dark Moon Qi warriors airily spread out to surround Pei Qiqi.

Seeing that some of the most powerful Dark Moon experts had shown up in this place, Pei Qiqi instantly came to realize that Hu Han must have revealed the location of her teleportation portal to them. This was no coincidence that had they showed up here at the same time.

As the commander of the Dark Moon's base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, Ma Jiu was at the late Greater Heaven stage. Among the men he had brought, two were at the Greater Heaven stage. Only the three of them were more than enough to kill Pei Qiqi in an open space.

However, fortunately for her, they were in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“Oh yeah? Come and get me then!” With those words, Pei Qiqi flashed to a location where numerous spatial rifts were swimming about. She constantly shifted her position to avoid contact with them.

Not daring to enter the area, Ma Jiu and the other powerful Dark Moon experts could only watch her from afar.

In another corner of the mountain range...

Nie Tian rose to his feet after detecting a fight going on not far from him.

He mixed his psychic awareness with power from the fragmentary stars in his mind, and formed six other Heaven Eyes.

With seven Heaven Eyes in the sky, he instantly gained a clear grasp of everything that was going on in the vicinity.

Just as he was about to move out, Hu Han's voice rang out from within the Sound Stone in his waist pocket. “Are you still there, Hua Tian?”

“Amazing timing,” Nie Tian thought to himself as he took out the

Sound Stone and responded, “I am, but I just detected a battle going on nearby. I’m going to see what’s going on.”

“No! Don’t! Stay where you are and wait for me!” Hu Han sounded anxious. “Considering your cultivation base, you’d better stay out of battles of all sorts! You can’t possibly change anything with your current strength. Plus, if you get yourself killed, I’ll suffer from it as well.”

Nie Tian could feel that Hu Han was probably panting because she was hastening to his position.

Harboring suspicion in his mind, Nie Tian put the Sound Stone away and followed his Heaven Eyes’ guide to the location where a fierce battle was taking place.

Before he showed up, his seven Heaven Eyes had already obtained a thorough grasp of the battle.

The battle was between two sides. Some were wearing Blood Skull garments, and their leader was a man in his late twenties. The man seemed to be at the late Heaven stage, which was higher than any of his men.

He was wearing pitch-black gloves, which were covered in what seemed to be fangs. At first glance, his hands looked like the opened mouths of two beasts.

At that moment, he was swinging his fist, single-handedly



fighting two experts with the same cultivation base as him.

On the other side of the battlefield, two Heaven stage Blood Skull members were standing back to back, defending against five early Heaven stage attackers. One of them was wielding a long, black spear and the other was holding a wide sword.

There were seven people attacking the Blood Skull members. Since they were dressed differently, they seemed to belong to different organizations.

Each and every one of them emanated a strong killing intent and had bloodthirsty looks in their eyes, as if they were going to skin and devour the three Blood Skull members alive.

A late Heaven stage expert grinned sinisterly and called out, “My brothers, Cai Yuan here is the son of the head of the Blood Skull! If we can capture him alive, we’ll be able to demand tons of spirit stones and spiritual tools from the Blood Skull! Those Blood Skull bastards have organized numerous operations against us and killed lots of our brothers. We’ve finally found an opportunity to even things up today!

“The spirit stones and spiritual materials we’ll get from the Blood Skull will enable us to live the rest of our lives extravagantly in Ash City or even the Land of the Abandoned!”

The seven of them cheered each other up, “Let’s do this!” “Don’t let him get away!”

They madly summoned their spiritual power and brandished their spiritual tools as they bombarded the three Blood Skull members.

“Cai Yuan!” After getting a clear view of all this with his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian was surprised.

Li Ye had mentioned Cai Yuan’s name when he had told him about Cai Yue, the daughter of the Blood Skull’s leader, while waiting outside of the cultivation rooms.

According to Li Ye, the head of the Blood Skull had two children, Cai Yue for a daughter, and Cai Yuan for a son.

Li Ye had also said that Cai Yuan spent most of his time in the Void Illusion Mountain Range instead of Shatter City, tempering his strength and battle prowess through bloody battles.

As a matter of fact, he wasn’t highly regarded only because of his background. Rather, he had won the respect of the members of the Blood Skull and powerful experts from other forces by shedding blood with his men in countless battles.

“Don’t you even imagine that you can capture our young lord with just the seven of you!” With these words, the man with the wide sword threw his head back and let out a roar. His sword made the sounds of wind and thunder as he swung it, creating numerous bolts of lightning.

CRACKLE! BOOM!

In the next moment, one of his opponents was engulfed by lightning as he trudged backwards with dark smoke rising from him.

PUFF!

At that moment, however, another of his opponents drove an awl-shaped spiritual tool through his leather armor and into his abdomen, leaving a sizable bloody hole.

“Go, little lord! Don’t mind us!” Suffering from the extreme pain, the man brandished his wide sword, sending out numerous lightning bolts as he charged towards the two Heaven stage experts who were attacking Cai Yuan. He wished to distract them so that Cai Yuan might be able to find an opportunity to escape.

“Get back to your own opponents!” Cai Yuan gave an angry shout. “I don’t need you to rescue me!”

At that moment, Nie Tian finally arrived at the battlefield. With a strange expression on his face, he glanced back and forth before saying, “I’m from Shatter City. If you’re willing to pay me in spirit stones, I’ll be happy to kill these people for you. One thousand spirit stones for one kill, but I’ll only take on those with early Heaven cultivation bases or lower.”

# Chapter 252: A New Variation!

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WHOOSH!

As he spoke, Nie Tian dashed towards the man who had been hit by lightning and was still trudging backwards.

The man, who was at the early Heaven stage, still had fragmentary sparks sputtering on his body and dark smoke rising from his hair. Apparently, he had sustained some serious injuries.

He sensed danger as Nie Tian rapidly closed in on him, surrounded by his chaotic magnetic field.

However, before he had the time to react, Nie Tian's magnetic field had already enveloped him, immediately causing him to lose control of his spiritual and psychic power.

During his previous battles, Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field had been proven effective on Greater Heaven stage experts, let alone an early Heaven stage cultivator like this man.

BOOM!

In the next moment, Nie Tian's flame-wreathed fist bombarded the man's chest like a giant hammer.

The man, who had already sustained heavy injuries, obviously

didn't have the strength to fend off such a violent strike, and thus had his chest bones shattered. The light in his eyes disappeared as he was sent flying out of Nie Tian's magnetic field.

He coughed up a mouthful of blood and was dead before his body even touched the ground.

Nie Tian grinned as he slowly approached his victim and squatted down to take his bracelet of holding. After searching his whole body for valuables, he said, "What a poor wretch."

Somewhat disappointed, Nie Tian sent a wisp of his psychic awareness to scan the bracelet of holding, but all he discovered were a hundred spirit stones and a bunch of worthless items.

Afterwards, Nie Tian turned around and returned to the battlefield where the other six were still fighting.

Killing the man had taken Nie Tian no more than a dozen seconds.

Originally, no one on either side had attached much importance to Nie Tian, who seemed to be nothing more than a big talker. Cai Yuan didn't even spare him a second glance.

After all, Nie Tian was merely at the Lesser Heaven stage, lower than anyone present. He didn't think a nobody like him would be able to change the course of the battle.

That was why Cai Yuan hadn't even bothered to reply to Nie Tian's offer, and had only considered him as fool who had no better things to do.

However, after realizing that Nie Tian had killed an early Heaven stage cultivator in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, both Cai Yuan and his opponents couldn't help but spare some attention to check him out.

As of now, Nie Tian's body had already been tempered to the point where a mere glance at him would make his enemies feel nervous.

Facing Cai Yuan's gaze, Nie Tian laughed heartily and said, "I didn't do a thorough job on that one, so that one is free."

Nie Tian was also aware that his successful kill was based on the fact that his victim had already sustained serious injuries.

**BAM! BAM! BAM!**

Loud sounds were created from the friction of air as Cai Yuan rapidly swung his gloved fists, forcing one of his opponents to step backwards.

He took advantage of the opportunity and shouted to his subordinate with the wide sword, "Get the hell back to your opponents, Zhao Feng! I can handle these two at the same time. I don't need you to help me!"

Blood was still flowing out of the Blood Skull member named Zhao Feng, while two fierce-looking men were chasing after him.

After berating Zhao Feng, Cai Yuan turned around and shot a glance at Nie Tian, saying, “Starting now, I’ll give you eight hundred spirit stones for killing one early Heaven stage enemy of ours, and two thousand spirit stones for a middle Heaven stage one. However you do it, I don’t care.”

“Wow, middle Heaven stage enemies?” After a moment of hesitation, Nie Tian nodded, “I’ll give it a shot.”

“Zhou Qi! Go kill this brat!” A late Heaven stage expert had a disdainful expression on his face as he formed several hand seals, commanding a set of two sharp claws to fly towards Cai Yuan’s waist.

The claws were iron-gray, and rust spots could be seen on them. However, bright dots of light constantly shot out of them as they whizzed through the air.

From the look of it, those bright light dots contained toxins, and that was why Cai Yuan dared not defend against them with anything other than his gloves.

Zhou Qi, an early Heaven stage cultivator, was originally chasing after Zhao Feng. However, the moment he received the order from his leader, he spun around and went after Nie Tian.

“Go!” All of a sudden, a staff with a tiger head on top shot out of his hand.

As it traveled at an astonishing speed in the air, a violent roar rang out from within it right before a enormous, white tiger emerged from the top of the staff. Its frenzied roars created a wave of strong psychic power that shot straight towards Nie Tian’s mind.

However, as soon as the wave entered Nie Tian’s chaotic magnetic field, it disappeared into thin air.

Even the white tiger was instantly twisted, became blurry, and was ripped to pieces the moment it entered.

With a dreadful shriek, what remained of the white tiger retreated to the staff.

Zhou Qi’s expression suddenly flickered.

He was aware that it was the incomplete soul of a fourth grade White Spot Tiger that had been sealed into his staff. However, even though the soul was incomplete, it was still as strong as a Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior, and the aura emitted could easily confuse the mind of a Qi warrior with a lower cultivation base.

Zhou Qi’s plan had been to kill Nie Tian without breaking a sweat while his mind was influenced by the White Spot Tiger.



However, he hadn't anticipated that the staff and the White Spot Tiger's soul would both go out of control when they were three meters from Nie Tian.

At that moment, fear could be seen on Zhou Qi's face as he watched Nie Tian stepping towards him with a grin on his face. Not knowing what Nie Tian was capable of, he could only move backwards to keep a sizable distance from Nie Tian.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Enveloped by his chaotic magnetic field, Nie Tian stretched out his arms and splayed his hands, and then numerous flames that resembled burning snakes shot out of his ten fingertips.

Using his mind, he commanded them to hover around Zhou Qi, waiting for an opportunity to strike.

The close to a dozen fire snakes Nie Tian had created with the Flame Spirit Incantation managed to confine Zhou Qi in a very small area, while Nie Tian gradually closed in on him.

As he did, Nie Tian once again raised his hand and used the secret magic he had learned from the mysterious land to gather the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Watching the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth converging from every direction, Nie Tian stopped moving forward, a mysterious smile appearing at the corner of his mouth.

It took only a few seconds for a spiritual energy ball the size of a watermelon to form in his palm.

Unlike the spiritual energy balls he had created in the mysterious land or the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace, this spiritual energy ball was gray and misty inside, filled with toxins and filth that hadn't belonged to the Realm of Split Void until the catastrophic upheaval.

Therefore, Nie Tian didn't dare to try to absorb power from it to cultivate; he only wanted to test it out on his enemies.

For some unknown reason, the spiritual energy ball filled with foreign impurities rattled within the chaotic magnetic field.

It seemed that numerous types of strange forces were countering one another within the gray spiritual energy ball, sending out mysterious, yet strong, energy fluctuations.

**SHEW!**

With a thought, Nie Tian commanded the gray spiritual energy ball to fly madly towards Zhou Qi.

However, the internal conflicts within the spiritual energy ball

caused it to explode before it could reach him.

The explosion sent countless spots of light into the surroundings; some were gray, some were brown, some were purple, and some were green.

Each and every one of them contained the same strange power that filled every corner of the Realm of Split Void. Like a rain of rainbows, the light dots enveloped the entire area that Zhou Qi was standing in.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

As soon as the strange light spots made contact with Zhou Qi's white, defensive light shield, it shattered into shreds.

At that very moment, the fire snakes that had been slithering around him swarmed in and shot towards his chest and back.

Meanwhile, the multicolored light spots also converged on him like countless fine raindrops.

Under the combined attack, Zhou Qi let out bloodcurdling screams as parts of his skin began to fester.

Some parts of him rapidly turned black and reeked with horrible smells, while others had bulging veins, as if they were going to pop at any moment.

Screaming and shrieking, Zhou Qi gradually collapsed to the ground, with the life aura coming from him growing weaker and weaker before disappearing completely.

“Eight hundred spirit stones!” At that moment, Cai Yuan called out, giving Nie Tian an approving glance, signaling for him to keep at it.

After witnessing Nie Tian killing another early Heaven stage enemy with such miraculous methods, the other two Blood Skull members got a huge boost to their fighting spirit. The pressure that had been weighing on them seemed to have suddenly been removed.

However, to their surprise, Nie Tian didn’t follow his victory with another strike against other early Heaven stage enemy.

Instead, he stood there and stared blankly at the corpse of Zhou Qi, since he had a feeling that Zhou Qi’s death didn’t have much to do with his fire snakes; it was the spiritual energy ball that had killed him.

Nie Tian’s eyes shone with the light of enlightenment as he suddenly realized that he had just discovered a favorable attacking skill to use in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, or even the entire Realm of Split Void, which was to use the polluted spiritual Qi!

Even though the spiritual energy ball he had formed with the polluted spiritual Qi was extremely unstable, its might had been

proven to be surprisingly great!

The explosion of the spiritual energy ball had easily broken the defensive shield of an early Heaven stage cultivator and rapidly eroded the victim's body, causing him to die within seconds.

“Let's try again!” Thrilled after finding this extremely powerful weapon, Nie Tian created another similar-sized spiritual energy ball with the same method.

He used one Heaven Eye to conduct a thorough examination of the gray spiritual energy ball, and found that there were at least six different types of power within the watermelon-sized spiritual energy ball.

The six types of power had their distinct traits; some were toxic, some emitted horrible smells, some were colder than ice, some were violent and uncontrollable, and some were void-like and mysterious.

Each and every type of power shared the same origin as the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth. It was just that they were from other domains, or the void hidden deep within some spatial rifts.

Originally, the various types of power had been scattered in the tainted atmosphere, keeping a peaceful distance from each other.

However, when Nie Tian forcefully bound them together, the six types of power were densely confined to a small space, and thus

began to fight with each other and grow violent.

That was why the might of this kind of spiritual energy was so ragingly formidable.

“This spiritual energy ball is like a bomb made up of a variety of unstable energies that could go off at any moment! This is awesome!”

Ecstasy could be seen on Nie Tian’s face, as if he had just solved a profound mystery. Without any delay, he charged towards another early Heaven stage enemy, carrying the newly-formed spiritual energy ball with him.

As soon as he noticed Nie Tian’s actions, a tremor ran through his enemy’s body, who was still engaged in a fierce battle with the black spear-wielding Blood Skull member.

Interestingly, even the Blood Skull member and his other opponent showed fear in their eyes after realizing that the spiritual energy ball was floating their way.

That was because they had both noticed that the previous spiritual energy ball had exploded before even reaching Zhou Qi, and the light spots and impurities that had shot out of the spiritual energy ball had covered a very large area like a rainstorm.

From what they could tell, Nie Tian didn’t have complete control of the spiritual energy ball, and thus wouldn’t be able to use it to

bombard a specific target.

Whenever it exploded, everything within it would shoot out in every direction and deal indiscriminate damage to both its target and friendly forces.

“What the...!” Without the slightest hesitation, the three of them scattered in different directions.

Nie Tian was dumbfounded at the scene, and soon realized what the three of them were afraid of.

# Chapter 253: Turn

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BOOM!

All of a sudden, the spiritual energy ball exploded on its way to the early Heaven stage bandit.

In the next moment, multicolored light spots almost filled the sky, and some of them found their way to the man's protective light shield as they rained down from the heavens.

Almost at the same time, the man's spiritual power shield shattered, and some of the purple and green sparks fell onto the man's skin.

Like strong acid, they immediately ate their way deep into the man's flesh; the contaminated parts rapidly festered and emitted smoke.

At that moment, a Blood Skull member found the perfect opportunity and hurled his pitch-black spear towards the man's chest.

In the blink of an eye, the long spear pierced through the man like a black bolt of lightning, pinning him to a huge, pale stone.

Surprised, Nie Tian went blank for a brief moment before turning to Cai Yuan and asking, "Who takes credit for this kill?"



“Hahaha!” The Black Skull member let out a heartily laugh and said with a pleasant smile, “You! I’ll give you the eight hundred spirit stones!”

The name of the man with the black spear was Wang Zhuo. He and Zhao Feng had been struggling with defending against five attackers when Nie Tian had first appeared.

If Nie Tian hadn’t appeared and killed two of the raiders consecutively and injured one with his spiritual energy ball, Zhao Feng, who had already sustained injuries to his abdomen, probably would have already been killed.

However, since Nie Tian had showed up and caused the deaths of three early Heaven stage attackers, Zhao Feng and Wang Zhuo now only needed to focus on two middle Heaven stage cultivators, so the burden that had been weighing on them was greatly relieved.

Delighted to see their situation turned around by Nie Tian, Wang Zhuo was very glad to pay Nie Tian the eight hundred spirit stones, which was nothing to him.

“Straightforward! I like it!” Nie Tian laughed broadly after seeing that Wang Zhuo was willing to pay him out of his own pocket. Then, he suddenly asked, “Wait, what about that man’s valuables?”

“Help yourself to them!” Obviously, the man’s belongings were far from enough to intrigue Wang Zhuo, and Nie Tian’s enthusiasm for money didn’t disgust him at all. Therefore, he

blurred into action and arrived by the corpse in a split second.

The moment he pulled his long spear out of the corpse, a black aura immediately wreathed the spear.

With a ferocious smile on his face and strong killing intent in his eyes, he turned around and once again charged toward one of their remaining enemies.

Off to the side, surrounded by a thunderous aura, Zhao Feng dashed toward the other enemy, holding his wide sword tightly with both hands.

Both Wang Zhuo and Zhao Feng were warriors who had gone through the tests of hundreds of battles in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Both their battle prowess and resilience were far superior to their opponents.

Their two opponents, on the other hand, didn't meet the standards to join the Blood Skull, and thus wandered outside Shatter City, awaiting opportunities to sneak out and kill those who left the city alone.

No matter their spiritual tools or fighting skills, they couldn't be compared with Zhao Feng and Wang Zhuo.

Since there was a rather sizable gap between their strengths, Nie Tian only watched for a short while before becoming convinced that Zhao Feng and Wang Zhuo would prevail if there were no

mishaps.

Hence, he didn't feel the necessity to join the battle.

Thus, he grabbed the staff with a tiger head on top from the ground and put it away into his bracelet of holding. Afterwards, he paced to one of his victims, squatted down to take his bracelet of holding, and then checked his other pockets. After finding nothing worthy of note, he moved on to his second victim.

Just as he bent down to take the man's bracelet of holding and search the corpse for valuables, a familiar voice echoed out.

"Hua Tian! Where are you, Hua Tian!" Hu Han's voice rang out from within the Sound Stone in Nie Tian's pocket. She sounded somewhat anxious after failing to find Nie Tian in the place where he had been cultivating.

Nie Tian took out the Sound Stone and held it close to his mouth before giving Hu Han a general idea of his location, "I'm here."

"Just wait for me!" Hu Han called out. "I'll be there in a second!"

The two late Heaven stage experts, who had been attacking Cai Yuan together, heard Nie Tian and Hu Han's conversation.

"Someone has come!"

“It must be the Blood Skull’s backup!”

“Damn!”

They rapidly exchanged a glance and made up their minds. “Let’s go!”

The two of them immediately ended their battle against Cai Yuan and fled in opposite directions.

The other two who had been fighting Wang Zhuo and Zhao Feng shrewdly noticed their leaders’ retreat, and thus made a sensible decision by scattering and speeding off in different directions as well.

“Hey, where are you going?!” Wang Zhuo and Zhao Feng respectively followed each of them while blood continued flowing out of Zhao Feng’s wound on his abdomen.

“Leave them be!” Cai Yuan shouted. “Come back, you two! We’ll have plenty of opportunities to get them after we recover. Your wound needs to be tended to immediately, Zhao Feng. Otherwise, you might die from massive blood loss.”

Upon hearing Cai Yuan’s order, Wang Zhuo and Zhao Feng both instantly ceased their pursuit.

Zhao Feng descended to the ground, supporting himself with his wide sword. Then, he used his other hand to take out a handful of

medicinal pills before stuffing them down his throat.

Cai Yuan scurried to his side and took out a bottle of external ointment from his ring of holding before carefully addressing the messy wound on his abdomen.

Zhao felt extremely flattered as he said, “This is too precious, Little Lord. You’re wasting it on me.”

Cai Yuan waved his hand, beckoning for him not to speak anymore, and then said, “You’ve got to absorb the ointment into your flesh and blood, and get better as quickly as possible. No matter how expensive it is, as long as it’s used on those who matter, it’s well worth it. The three of us have been fighting side by side for years. Although you two call me young lord all the time, deep down, I’ve always considered you my brothers.”

Upon hearing these words, Zhao Feng’s round, fierce-looking eyes welled up slightly as he nodded vigorously. Afterwards, he focused on refining the efficacy of the ointment.

Nie Tian noticed that not only did the originally dreadful wound in Zhao Feng’s abdomen immediately stop bleeding after the ointment was applied, but the flesh in the wound even seemed to become more alive as the wound rapidly healed.

Meanwhile, Zhao Feng’s ghastly face gradually regained its former healthy color.

Seeing the changes in Zhao Feng's condition, Cai Yuan appeared much relieved as he beckoned for Nie Tian to come over to him.

As Nie Tian approached, Cai Yuan's ring of holding shone with subtle light, and in the next moment, a pile of spirit stones appeared in front of him. "Here's 1,600 spirit stones. You can count them yourself."

"Little Lord," said Wang Zhuo, "I promised those 800 spirit stones to the kid..."

Cai Yuan waved his hand as he stopped him. "Are you saying you have more wealth than me?"

Wang Zhuo grinned as he understood Cai Yuan's intentions, and thus no longer insisted on paying those 800 spirit stones himself.

After witnessing every act and word between Cai Yuan and his two brothers, Nie Tian approved of his way of doing things.

As he walked towards Cai Yuan, Nie Tian secretly canceled the chaotic magnetic field around him and stimulated the power of the green jade bracelet, enveloping himself within a green light shield.

"I trust that you wouldn't trick me." Then, Nie Tian put the 1,600 spirit stones away in his bracelet of holding while asking, "You've been organizing activities in the Void Illusion Mountain Range for a long time already. How come you guys got into such trouble?"

The fact that the son of the Blood Skull's head, who was no stranger to the Void Illusion Mountain Range, had been trapped in a dangerous situation made Nie Tian somewhat puzzled.

"Our base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range is rather far from here," Cai Yuan explained. "Plus, I'm not a big fan of acting obediently and growing under my seniors' protection, even though many say I should. Therefore, this isn't the first time that I've encountered tough situations this far from our base, and I doubt that it will be the last.

"However, I'm a lucky man. I've survived every ambush and assault throughout the years."

After providing Nie Tian with an explanation, Cai Yuan looked him up and down with a measuring gaze and asked, quite intrigued, "If my assessment is correct, you're only at the Lesser Heaven stage."

"Yes, I'm at the late Lesser Heaven stage, looking for a breakthrough." Nie Tian answered without holding anything back.

"The Lesser Heaven stage..." Cai Yuan nodded, and then asked, as if he had grown more interested, "Are you from Shatter City? What's your name? I don't think we've met."

Nie Tian smiled heartily. "It's Hua Tian. I'm rather new to Shatter City."

Looking deeply at Nie Tian, Cai Yuan pondered for a moment and said, “You’ve got some good skills there. If you don’t have a better place to be, you’re welcome to join the Blood Skull. I’ll recommend you. When you’ve become an official member, you’ll be able to live in the city without having to pay anything.

“There are many other benefits as well. For example, you’ll be allowed to use our teleportation portal to travel back and forth between Shatter City and the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“Furthermore, if you can kill members of the Wild Fire and Dark Moon, not only will you get to keep everything you loot from them, but you’ll also receive an additional reward from us.”

Cai Yuan untiringly explained the numerous advantages of becoming a member of the Blood Skull to Nie Tian because he considered Nie Tian to be a young man with great prospects.

If he could draw him into his organization, then as his cultivation base rose in the future, he could potentially grow into his right-hand man.

“I don’t plan to do that anytime soon, but I’ll let you know if I change my mind.” Nie Tian promised.

“Alright,” said Cai Yuan. “Truth be told, I don’t like persuading people, much less forcing people. This is my first time encouraging someone to join the Blood Skull.”



“Thank you for your kind offer,” Nie Tian said.

WHOOSH!

At that very moment, Hu Han flashed into appearance.

She caught sight of Cai Yuan the moment she arrived. Her expression flickered as she gently exclaimed, “Cai Yuan!”

It appeared that Cai Yuan knew her as well. The moment he saw her, he frowned and turned to Nie Tian and asked, “You came with her?”

Unsure of what was happening, Nie Tian nodded.

“I take my words back. The Blood Skull doesn’t need people like you.” As soon as he learned that Nie Tian and Hu Han had come together, Cai Yuan assumed a completely different attitude. He rose to his feet and turned his cold face to Zhao Feng and Wang Zhuo, saying, “We’ve spent too much time here. It’s about time we got back.”

Even Zhao Feng, who was in the middle of recuperation, rose to his feet upon hearing Cai Yuan’s words, and strode away after him.

Confusion could be seen on Nie Tian’s face.

He had engaged in a warm and friendly conversation with Cai Yuan right before Hu Han had showed up. Cai Yuan had even offered to take him in as a member of the Blood Skull.

However, Cai Yuan's attitude turned around as soon as he learned that they were companions.

"I've got things I need to talk to you about, Hua Tian," Hu Han said. "Let's get out of here."

"Okay." Even though he harbored heavy suspicions towards Hu Han, Nie Tian chose to walk after her as the two of them marched towards the place where he had practiced cultivation.

Meanwhile, with a thought, he sent a Heaven Eye to tail Cai Yuan, in an attempt to find out why he had adopted such frigid manners towards Hu Han.

As the three of them strode in the direction of their base, Wang Zhuo couldn't help but ask, "Do you know that woman, Little Lord? Why did you change your attitude toward Hua Tian the moment you learned that they're traveling together?"

Cai Yuan let out a cold harrumph and said, "That woman's name is Hu Han, and she works for Li Ye. About six months ago, Qiqi asked me for a favor. She wanted me to investigate that woman's background. According to the information I gathered, that woman is deeply involved with Ma Jiu from the Dark Moon, and so she must be hiding something.

“I’m afraid she has ulterior motives working for Li Ye. However, that fatty, Li Ye, is a meticulous man. Adding in the fact that he almost never leaves Shatter City, and Qiqi is always there to look after him, and nothing will happen to him.

“On the other hand, Li Ye must also be smart enough to keep an eye on her. He only sees her equipment forging skills, and uses her to do menial work for him.”

Wang Zhuo was shocked. “She’s connected with the Dark Moon?”

Cai Yuan nodded and continued, “Since Hua Tian came here with her, it’s very likely that he’s also been deployed in Shatter City by the Dark Moon. He might even have helped us to get close to me, and actually has some dirty trick up his sleeve.”

Enlightened, Wang Zhuo said, “Oh, that’s how it is.”

At the same time, Nie Tian managed to overhear the conversation between Cai Yuan and Wang Zhuo via his Heaven Eye. His eyes glittered as he stared closely at Hu Han from behind.

He recalled how Li Ye had warned him that he had better guard himself against Hu Han at all times before he set out to the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Adding in Cai Yuan’s comments about her, Nie Tian secretly formed a chaotic magnetic field around him. Only then did he

come to a stop and say to Hu Han, “Alright. Whatever you’ve got to say, say it. I’ve still got to practice my cultivation.”

Hu Han turned around and said, “I’ve discovered a hidden spiritual mine. Since I can’t mine it myself, I need your assistance.”

“I’m not interested,” Nie Tian shook his head and replied. “I’ve got enough spirit stones with me, and I’m only here to practice cultivation. Besides, I’m only at the Lesser Heaven stage. What can I possibly help you with?”

With those words, Nie Tian quietly expanded his chaotic magnetic field to a five-meter radius.

Eyebrows furrowed, Hu Han looked deeply at Nie Tian for a moment before saying, “Are you suspecting anything? You saw me take the Heart Mastication Pill that Li Ye gave me, so I’ll never attempt to hurt or kill you. If I do that, I won’t be able to get the antidote from Li Ye after returning to Shatter City, and soon my heart will be gnawed away.”

“I don’t care what your intentions are. I’m just not interested. All I want is to practice my cultivation!” Nie Tian grew somewhat irritated.

Hu Han’s expression changed subtly as she seemed to have sensed something. She let out a sigh and said with a shrug, “That being the case, I have no other choice but to use force.”

Upon hearing those words, Nie Tian immediately turned around and dashed madly towards the direction that Cai Yuan and his men had left in.

He was well-aware that since Hu Han was at the early Greater Heaven stage, he wouldn't stand a chance if he were to fight her single-handedly under normal circumstances. The only way to defeat her would be to seek help from Cai Yuan.

“You can't get away,” Hu Han said with a plain tone while chasing after him.

# Chapter 254: Shattering Shackles

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With a swing of her hand, a bronze mirror shot out from Hu Han's palm.

The mirror emanated precious light under the night sky, and in only three breaths of time, it surpassed Nie Tian and stopped in front of him.

Floating facing Nie Tian, the bronze mirror suddenly began to shine with a dazzlingly bright light, before the light spread out and formed a large, transparent wall, blocking Nie Tian's path of escape.

BOOM!

The moment Nie Tian's five-meter radius chaotic magnetic field made contact with the mirror-like light wall, the perfectly smooth surface of the light wall immediately grew twisted.

As one ripple after another was created on the surface of the light wall, Nie Tian's reflection appeared within the bronze mirror.

It was at that moment that a strong restrictive force was born within the mirror, binding Nie Tian's reflection.

However, it seemed that what had happened within the mirror was also happening to Nie Tian himself. He felt as if he had been frozen, and every movement of his limbs became extremely

difficult.

An alarmed expression could be seen on his face as his dashing momentum was stopped.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Numerous bright sparks were created from the area where the magnetic field met the spiritual energy wall, while subtle fissures could already be seen on the light wall.

Hu Han gradually approached Nie Tian and said with a soft voice, “I hope you don’t blame me, Hua Tian. I’ve no other choice. The Dark Moon has my brother. I have to do things I despise for them to trade for his freedom. Since you mean a great deal to Li Ye, I assume they might just use you to get some information from Li Ye. I don’t think they’re going to kill you.”

Hu Han seemed to be explaining her difficult situation to Nie Tian, but she was actually trying to convince herself so that she didn’t have to live with a guilty conscience.

She was well-aware that Ma Jiu was cruel and merciless. If he couldn’t get what he wanted from Li Ye, he would definitely kill Nie Tian without blinking.

However, this was already not her concern, after seeing her brother’s severed finger.

Not to mention Nie Tian, she was even willing to sacrifice her own life to save her brother.

As Hu Han stepped closer to Nie Tian, one of her eyebrows rose and surprise appeared in her eyes.

“What?!”

She noticed that the spiritual power wall her bronze mirror had created was being compromised by the mysterious magnetic field that surrounded Nie Tian.

Parts of the energy wall had already broken, and the magnetic field was spreading towards the floating bronze mirror.

Nie Tian’s reflection in the mirror was grave, yet calm.

Upon seeing this, Hu Han secretly took a dark-red, fist-sized ball from within her bracelet of holding. Raging flames could be seen at the core of the ball, where there seemed to lie endless flame power.

Hu Han was both an equipment forger and a cultivator, and fire was her main cultivation attribute.

She was controlling the bronze mirror with her spiritual power, along with a secret psychic magic.

Upon seeing that her bronze mirror was failing, she hastily



resorted to her fire incantations in the hopes of capturing Nie Tian before any new complications came up.

Standing surrounded by his magnetic field, Nie Tian stared straight into the bronze mirror.

He had a strong feeling that there was a mysterious connection between his reflection in the mirror and himself.

It seemed that the moment his figure had appeared within the mirror, the mirror had begun to influence his soul and lock down his body in some mysterious way.

More to his surprise, his chaotic magnetic field completely failed to stop the process.

“Psychic lockdown!” Nie Tian took a deep breath and forced himself to calm down, and then focused his mind on the seven fragmentary stars in his soul, each and every one of which was shining brightly and gloriously.

It was the middle of the night. A large number of bright stars lit up the dark sky.

While Nie Tian was about to stimulate the power of the fragmentary stars, he suddenly noticed that he was actually covered in a fine network of extremely fine strings that were almost invisible.

Nie Tian pondered for a moment, and soon reached a shocking conclusion: Hu Han had stealthily planted those strings long ago, perhaps when he had deactivated his magnetic field after finishing fighting off Cai Yuan's enemies, or perhaps even earlier.

Nie Tian gritted his teeth. "The woman bore these thoughts from the start!"

Hu Han must have known that since there was a significant gap between their cultivation bases, she wouldn't be discovered if she only acted when Nie Tian was distracted.

Enraged by this new realization, Nie Tian sent out a thought, and countless rays of starlight shot out of the seven fragmentary stars.

As soon as the rays of starlight that were as sharp as blades made contact with some of the fine strings, they were severed.

Hu Han, who was stepping towards Nie Tian, instantly sensed the anomaly. Her pupils shrunk as a pained expression appeared on her average-looking face.

"He actually destroyed my psychic shackles with his Lesser Heaven stage strength?!"

While Hu Han was astounded, Nie Tian let out a cold harrumph and madly summoned flame power from his spiritual sea.

As his entire body became wreathed in a flaming aura, the

invisible strings over his body were scorched and became fragile.

At that moment, Nie Tian thrashed his body.

BAM! BAM!

Sounds inaudible to the naked ear came from his arms and legs as every string that Hu Han had planted on him broke into shreds.

It was also at that moment that Nie Tian's reflection in the bronze mirror began to grow blurry, which meant that he had already broken free from Hu Han's restrictive spell.

WHOOSH!

No longer bound to his position, Nie Tian gathered his power in his fist as he lunged towards the bronze mirror.

When the mirror was within his arm's reach, he bombarded it with his fist that was now like a fiercely burning hammer!

CRUNCH!

Noticeable fissures appeared on the surface of the bronze mirror, and it could no longer reflect anything or anyone.

"Go!" At that moment, Hu Han unleashed the ball from her palm.

Like a burning lightning bolt, it charged towards Nie Tian.

The area it covered was turned into a sea of flames.

It rapidly reached Nie Tian from behind, and its burning tail gathered into a huge cloud of fire high above Nie Tian's head.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

One after another, numerous flames fell out of the blazing cloud and rained on Nie Tian and his chaotic magnetic field.

When they entered Nie Tian's magnetic field, the field served as a meat grinder, grinding the shooting flames into tiny fire dots.

However, as more and more flames plummeted from the heavens, the ten meter-radius area Nie Tian was in was turned into sea of fire.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Within the magnetic field, numerous types of power were struggling to fight against the enormous amount of flames.

At that moment, the dark-red pearl began to descend from straight above Nie Tian's head.

BOOM!

Nie Tian felt like a huge mountain had been dropped on his shoulders. It crushed him with so much force that blood began flowing out of the corner of his mouth.

Meanwhile, the raging flames were still trying their best to overcome the resistance of the magnetic field to burn Nie Tian up.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

At that very moment, Nie Tian's heart began to race, and the green aura coiled up at the bottom of his heart grew active, along with the numerous crystal-like chains within it and the countless life marks within them.

An unearthly power that originated from his bloodline suddenly broke out with momentum that could shatter mountains and split the earth.

Without thinking for a second, Nie Tian summoned the various types of power within him, and focused to strike the pearl floating right above him with his Rage Punch.

BANG!!!

Upon impact, the dark-red pearl cracked and was sent flying into the heavens.

At the same time, Hu Han gave a muffled groan and came to a stop on her way towards Nie Tian, as if she had taken a heavy blow.

A disbelieving look appeared in Hu Han's wide eyes as she stared closely at Nie Tian from behind.

As for Nie Tian, after he bombarded the dark-red pearl with full force, not only did he hear a cracking sound from the pearl, but also a cracking sound from within himself.

He didn't seem to sustain any injuries from it, but rather had a mysterious sense of relief afterwards, as if a heavy burden on his mind had been lifted.

He briefly examined himself with his psychic awareness, and immediately threw his head back and laughed, his face filled with ecstasy.

He was certain that his Rage Punch had just pushed him through the bottleneck and into the next stage!

At that moment, he was overwhelmed by a miraculous feeling of breaking through an intangible barrier, which was the unique feeling that a cultivator could only experience after making a breakthrough.

Perhaps the fact that he had drained himself with the mighty

punch had contributed to his successful breakthrough. Although he felt depleted, he didn't feel completely powerless like when he had used the technique before.

Thump! Thump! Thump! Thump! Thump!

Nie Tian's heart was still pounding rapidly, and the green aura was still slithering untiringly within his heart.

Apparently, after the recent tempering using the Golden Stone Rhino's blood, his body had become stronger and better at handling such a consuming technique.

While Hu Han was shocked, Nie Tian turned around and charged towards her, enveloped by his gradually shrinking magnetic field.

"Is this guy really at the Lesser Heaven stage?" Hu Han couldn't remove her shocked gaze from Nie Tian as she suddenly began to hesitate.

The bronze mirror and dark-red pearl were her best and favorite spiritual tools. As a matter of fact, she had never suffered a single defeat using them to fight Qi warriors at the Heaven stage or lower.

However, not only did she fail to defeat Nie Tian with them, but both spiritual tools had sustained serious damage when she used them on Nie Tian. This made Hu Han feel extremely frustrated.

She couldn't help but wonder: Nie Tian already possessed such formidable battle prowess at the Lesser Heaven stage; what kind of existence he would become after entering the Heaven stage and Greater Heaven stage?

She somewhat regretted using force on Nie Tian. After all, if she couldn't capture him today and let him escape, he would become a sword hanging over her head for the rest of her life.

However, the thought of her brother, who might be suffering at this very moment, strengthened her determination. "I cannot let him escape!"

She walked forward and picked up her bronze mirror and pearl.

She had always had strong spiritual connections with those two spiritual tools. However, when she picked them up from the ground this time, she could sense that the connections were weak and flickering.

A distressed look appeared in her eyes as she realized that both the spiritual tools had been greatly damaged, and it was beyond her skills to repair them.

Li Ye might be able to fix them, but after today, she doubted that she would ever speak to Li Ye again.

Both Li Ye and his senior martial sister, Pei Qiqi, would undoubtedly consider her to be their enemy from now on.



The mere thought of Pei Qiqi made Hu Han shudder.

That was when she realized that, deep down, Pei Qiqi was actually the one who she really feared.

“I can never return to Shatter City again, not after this. I can only join and seek refuge with the Dark Moon now. Hua Tian and that small teleportation portal will be my first gift to them.”

Hu Han took a deep breath and, with a determined look in her eyes, wreathed herself with a raging flame aura. Like a ball of flames, she chased after Nie Tian.

However, since she had hesitated for a short while, Nie Tian was already quite a distance ahead of her. At that moment, Nie Tian shouted at the top of his lungs, “Hey, brothers of the Blood Skull! I want to do some more business with you!”

## Chapter 255: Entering the Heaven Stage!

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Nie Tian's shout was so loud and clear that even people in the farthest corners of the mountain range could hear him.

Since Zhao Feng's wound hadn't fully recovered, Cai Yuan, Zhao Feng, and Wang Zhuo were traveling at a slow speed in a valley when they heard Nie Tian's voice.

Surprise could be seen on Cai Yuan's face as he stopped and turned around.

"That's Hua Tian's voice," Wang Zhuo said.

Cai Yuan pondered for a short while with his eyes narrowed. Then, he turned to Zhao Feng and ordered, "You stay here and recover!"

With those words, he dashed towards the source of Nie Tian's voice like a sword leaving its sheath.

Upon seeing that he had moved out, Wang Zhuo followed him without the slightest hesitation.

Originally, considering Nie Tian's speed, it would have taken a while for him to catch up to Cai Yuan and his men, during which Hu Han would very likely catch up to him.

However, the fact that Cai Yuan and Wang Zhuo had turned around and charged in his direction rapidly shortened the distance between them.

It wasn't long before Nie Tian caught sight of the approaching Cai Yuan and Wang Zhuo behind him.

Panting heavily, Nie Tian called out the moment he caught sight of Cai Yuan, "I'll give you back the 1,600 spirit stones! On top of that, I'll throw in another 2,000 spirit stones if you can help me fight Hu Han!"

"This might be a trap, my lord!" Wang Zhuo warned Cai Yuan from behind his back.

He had suspected Nie Tian's motives the moment he had learned that Hu Han was connected with the Dark Moon and Nie Tian had come with her.

He believed that Nie Tian and Hu Han might be putting on a show to get close to Cai Yuan again.

After all, Nie Tian and Hu Han had just parted ways with them. The fact that they had turned on each other in such a short time made Wang Zhuo suspect that it was a set-up.

After hearing Wang Zhuo's speculation, Cai Yuan didn't respond to Nie Tian. Instead, with a discreet look in his eyes, he took out his gloves from within his ring of holding and put them on.

Then, he took out two medicinal pills and swallowed them while staring Nie Tian in the eye.

SHEW!

Hu Han finally arrived and came to a stop ten meters from Nie Tian, wreathed in a blazing aura.

With a calm face, Hu Han gently smiled at Cai Yuan and said, “Lord Cai, you just engaged in a fierce battle with some bandits not long ago. It seems that you haven’t fully recovered your strength. I know that you’re no ordinary man, but you’re at the late Heaven stage after all. You wouldn’t risk your subordinate’s and your own lives for Hua Tian, who’s neither your kin nor your friend, would you?”

Cai Yuan frowned and didn’t answer. Rather, he turned to Nie Tian and asked, “What happened?”

Nie Tian smiled bitterly and explained, “This woman wanted to capture me. I actually didn’t know her up until I came to the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Li Ye is my close friend. She learned that I was coming to the Void Illusion Mountain Range and pleaded with Li Ye to let her tag along. In order to prevent her from having any evil thoughts, Li Ye forced her to take a Heart Crushing Pill.

“He ordered her to look after me and keep me alive while we’re here. Otherwise, she wouldn’t get the antidote after returning to Shatter City.

“I thought that would ensure a safe trip with her, but I never expected that she would actually attempt to capture me for whatever her intentions are.”

“You’re close friends with fat Li Ye?” Cai Yuan asked.

“Yeah,” Nie Tian answered. “He allowed me to teleport to the Void Illusion Mountain Range via Miss Pei’s small teleportation portal.”

He had overheard Cai Yuan and Wang Zhuo’s conversation via his Heaven Eye, and speculated that Cai Yuan was somewhat close with Pei Qiqi.

Therefore, he intentionally mentioned the teleportation portal to indicate that he had close relationships with both Li Ye and Pei Qiqi.

As expected, after learning that Nie Tian had traveled here from Shatter City via Pei Qiqi’s teleportation portal, Cai Yuan made up his mind to help Nie Tian.

Cai Yuan was aware that Pei Qiqi had set up her own teleportation portal in the mountain range, but never allowed people to use it other than Li Ye and herself.

The fact that they were willing to let Nie Tian use it made it clear that Nie Tian was close to Pei Qiqi and Li Ye.

Cai Yuan clenched his fist, and his strange-looking gloves seemed to become like the opened mouths of a ferocious beast. “Hu Han, I’d suggest you go back where you’ve come from.”

He stepped to Nie Tian’s side and stood right beside him. Staring into Hu Han’s eyes, he prepared himself for what would come.

Wang Zhuo also summoned his long, pitch-black spear and stared at Hu Han while emitting a strong, killing aura.

Even though Cai Yuan was at the late Heaven stage and Wang Zhuo was at the middle Heaven stage, and they had just gone through a bloody battle, not a shred of fear could be seen in their eyes while facing the early Greater Heaven stage Hu Han.

Eyebrows furrowed, Hu Han sighed and said, “Why are you doing this, Lord Cai?”

“Save your breath!” Cai Yuan called out, impatience written across his face. “Either you fight the three of us to the death, or get out of here now and I’ll forget what happened here today!”

After hearing his words, Hu Han seemed indecisive.

She had heard about Cai Yuan’s fierceness even before she had moved to Shatter City. According to the rumors, he had already killed hundreds of powerful experts from the Dark Moon and the Wild Fire in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

In their eyes, Cai Yuan would definitely become the Blood Skull's leader. It was only a matter of time.

Although Cai Yuan was at the late Heaven stage, the gap between their strengths wasn't unbridgeable, and rumor had it that Cai Yuan had unearthly spiritual tools at his disposal.

Adding in Wang Zhuo, who was also a seasoned warrior, and Nie Tian, who seemed to have many mysteries, and she didn't have the confidence to win if a battle broke out.

While she was hesitating, Zhao Feng, who Cai Yuan had ordered to stay put, also appeared on the distant horizon and called out, "Little Lord! Our reinforcements are on the way. I've just got in contact with them!"

Upon hearing these words, Hu Han's expression flickered.

She took a deep look at Nie Tian and sighed. "I had no other choice. I hope you understand. The Dark Moon has my brother. Their leader Ma Jiu imprisoned him in the Land of the Abandoned. If I refuse to work for them, they will kill my brother."

With these words, she bowed slightly towards Nie Tian to express her apologies, and then turned around and left.

As soon as Hu Han left, Nie Tian dropped to the ground and took out 1,600 spirit stones from his bracelet of holding.

When he was about to bring out 2,000 more, Cai Yuan stopped him, saying, “There’s no need for more.”

He put away the 1,600 spirit stones and said, “You helped me and I returned the favor. We’re even.”

Just as Nie Tian was about to say something, Cai Yuan shook his head and said, “Where’s Qiqi’s teleportation portal, the one you used to come here?”

Nie Tian furrowed his brows.

Cai Yuan saw the hesitation in his eyes and added, “Hu Han betrayed you, so it’s very likely that she also sold Li Ye and Qiqi out by revealing the location of the teleportation portal to Ma Jiu.

“A teleportation portal is very valuable. Even the smallest and simplest one is easily worth 100,000 spirit stones.

“Ma Jiu will never pass on such a good opportunity to get one. If my speculations are correct, they’ve probably already moved out.”

Only after hearing those words did Nie Tian take out the map Li Ye had given him and show Cai Yuan the location of the portal, saying, “It’s right here.”

With a single glance at it, Cai Yuan understood which route he



should take. Then, he turned to Wang Zhuo and said, “You take Zhao Feng back to our base first, and then arrange for our men to meet me there. We can’t let the Dark Moon take Qiqi’s teleportation portal. I’ll try my best to stall them.”

Wang Zhuo’s expression flickered. “My lord, you want to go over there by yourself?”

Cai Yuan smiled and said, “Don’t worry. I won’t get myself in danger. After all, I know Ma Jiu is going to be there. I’ll hide close to the portal and keep my distance from the Dark Moon people.”

“B-but...” Wang Zhuo was still worried.

“This is an order,” Cai Yuan said with a stern face.

Wang Zhuo took a deep look at him, and then sighed and said, “Alright.”

He was well-aware of Cai Yuan’s temper, and that Cai Yuan had always been fond of Pei Qiqi. Part of the reason he had been training himself in the Void Illusion Mountain Range was because he wanted to get stronger and thus be worthy of Pei Qiqi.

As long as it was related to her, Cai Yuan had always shown great interest and enthusiasm, as opposed to his normally cold attitude.

Wang Zhuo knew that persuasion would fail even if he attempted it, so he decided to return as soon as possible and assemble their

best warriors to support Cai Yuan.

“Take care, my lord!”

With those words, Wang Zhuo turned around and sped toward Zhao Feng. He dragged the reluctant Zhao Feng away, and the two of them disappeared into the distance.

“Are you okay, Hua Tian?” Cai Yuan asked.

Nie Tian nodded and answered, “I’m fine.”

“Great.” Cai Yuan nodded back. “I think this area is relatively secure. I suggest you stay here and wait for my brothers to come back with reinforcements. They’ll definitely pass this place, so you can join them then. It’ll be the safest choice for you.”

“Alright.” Nie Tian nodded, and crushed the Sound Stone Hu Han had given him under Cai Yuan’s gaze.

“Good,” Cai Yuan said with an appreciative tone before he turned around and left.

As soon as he left, Nie Tian sat down and assumed the lotus position. He put on the green jade bracelet that Li Ye had given him to hold off the polluted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

Since he had almost drained every type of power he had during

his previous battle, the magnetic field around him was already on the verge of disappearing.

He took a deep breath and took out a spirit jade from within his bracelet of holding. Without any hesitation, he operated the Qi Refining Incantation to absorb its spiritual energy.

Spiritual energy that was ten times richer than that contained within a spirit stone poured out of the jade and flowed madly into his spiritual sea.

At the same time, the three vortexes of spiritual power in his spiritual sea sped up a few times.

Wisp after wisp of refined spiritual energy dispersed from the vortexes into his spiritual sea.

Only a short while later, the spirit jade cracked and was reduced to rubble.

Without any delay, he took out another one and started channeling its energy into his spiritual sea.

As his spiritual sea was filled with madly surging spiritual power, a new vortex gradually took shape and grew larger.

According to his master, with every breakthrough, one vortex of spiritual power would come into existence within his spiritual sea, so by the late Greater Heaven stage, he would have nine vortexes of

spiritual power.

Every time a new vortex of spiritual power was added to his spiritual sea, his spiritual sea would expand.

An additional vortex of spiritual power would allow him to be more efficient at absorbing and refining the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth, and thus accelerate the expansion of his spiritual sea.

Since he had made the breakthrough when he had used the Rage Punch to destroy Hu Han's red pearl, all he had to do now was to fill his spiritual sea with spiritual power, and the new vortex of spiritual power would form by itself.

This was exactly what Hua Mu had given him three spirit jades for before he had left.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

With the energy from the two spirit jades, the fourth vortex of spiritual energy gradually expanded.

CRUNCH!

Only a short while passed before the second spirit jade lost its glow and cracked open.

Without the slightest hesitation, Nie Tian took a third spirit jade

from within his bracelet of holding and began to absorb its copious amount of spiritual energy.

Just like that, he went through seven spirit jades.

It was not until he had drained the seventh spirit jade of spiritual energy that he sensed that the new vortex of spiritual energy had finally formed fully.

“Seven spirit jades!” Nie Tian was quite shocked. He realized that if he hadn’t obtained five spirit jades from Yang Ling early on, he wouldn’t have been able to finish the process so smoothly.

Hua Mu had anticipated that Nie Tian would need an enormous amount of spiritual energy to finish the process of entering the Heaven stage.

However, according to his understanding, a Lesser Heaven stage cultivator would need no more than two spirit jades to fully form their new vortex of spiritual energy after breaking through into the Heaven stage.

Considering Nie Tian’s extraordinary physique, he had given him one more to make sure he had enough.

Never had he imagined that Nie Tian was so much different from normal cultivators.

It took him seven spirit jades to create and expand his fourth

vortex of spiritual energy to the same size as the other three.

At that time, he had truly finished the transformation from the Lesser Heaven stage to the Heaven stage.

By the time the seventh spirit jade was drained, Nie Tian's spiritual sea was brimming with refined spiritual power.

Instead of stopping, he took out his last remaining spirit jade and used the energy it carried to expand the size of his full spiritual sea.

An unknown period of time passed.

By the time the eighth spirit jade broke into pieces, Nie Tian awoke from his cultivation and sprung to his feet. "Finally, the Heaven stage!"

Then, he threw his head back and let out a thunderous roar that was like the cry of a tiger or dragon.

# Chapter 256: Astounding Battle Prowess

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After consuming eight spirit jades, Nie Tian finally finished his transcendence.

As of now, four vortexes of spiritual power were rotating at high speeds in Nie Tian's spiritual sea. Moreover, his spiritual sea had expanded a few times, and been filled to the brim with pure spiritual power.

Not only that, when he carefully examined himself, he found that his vortexes of flame power, wood power, and star power had also expanded by at least three times.

That was when he realized that breaking through to a new stage could cause significant changes to his spiritual sea.

The transcendence of his spiritual sea not only allowed him to obtain more spiritual power, but also enabled him to condense more fire essence, wood essence, and stardew in his vortexes of flame power, wood power, and star power.

Now, he could keenly sense that surging spiritual power, as well as the three types of power with different attributes, were being rapidly infused into his meridians.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

One fiery snake after another rapidly formed and flew out of Nie

Tian's fingertips.

He could also feel that the speed at which the spiritual power circulated in his meridians was greatly enhanced.

Eyes narrowed, he focused all his attention on the changes inside of him while he ran tests by summoning flame power, wood power, and star power.

After a long while, he opened his eyes and awoke from his cultivation and enlightenment, realizing that the efficiency at which he generated and utilized power had greatly improved.

Before, he would have had to spend a few seconds to cast the Flame Spirit Incantation and form fiery snakes.

However, he now only needed one second to channel the flame power within his spiritual sea to his fingers through his meridians and create blazing snakes.

“How about the chaotic magnetic field?!” With that thought in mind, he immediately placed his palms opposite each other and formed the chaotic magnetic field at the fastest speed possible.

In the blink of an eye, a one-meter-radius chaotic magnetic field was formed around him.

If it were before he made his breakthrough, he would have had to spend quite a while to summon all the types of power he possessed



and adopt the right state of mind to cast the spell.

However, he, at most, needed three seconds to form it now.

Not only did it require less time for him to form the magnetic field, but it also required several times less time to expand it.

“Ten seconds!” He managed to expand the magnetic field to a ten-meter range in ten seconds.

Meanwhile, he examined himself, and found that he had only consumed less than one tenth of the power in his spiritual sea to achieve it.

It seemed that the acceleration and expansion of the vortexes had made it easier and faster for him to build up the magnetic field than before. At the same time, the significant growth in his spiritual sea allowed it to hold more power, and thus only one tenth of his total power was enough to establish a magnetic field that large.

“Let’s try something else!” Nie Tian took a deep breath and clenched his fist as flames of anger began to burn in his heart.

When his heart was filled with burning rage, the various types of power he possessed rushed out of his spiritual sea into his fist, along with his flesh power and psychic power.

Before, he hadn’t been able to control the process. Once he had

used the technique, he would drain every last bit of his strength.

However, it was different this time. To his surprise, he was able to control the amount of every type of power he summoned with great precision.

He only summoned one fourth of his spiritual power, and only added a very small amount of flame power, star power, wood power, and flesh power to cast the Rage Punch.

BOOM!

As soon as he drove his fist into a five-meter-high solid stone beside him, it exploded, sending pieces flying in every direction, dust slowly falling from the air.

Afterwards, he didn't have the same exhausted feeling as he had before when using this technique. Instead, he was still energetic and in high spirits.

From what Nie Tian could tell, the punch he had just thrown was more powerful and destructive than any of his previous strikes.

"After rising to a new cultivation base, everything is different," Nie Tian muttered to himself.

Since he could now accurately manage the power he added to the Rage Punch and thus control of the might of it, he no longer needed to worry that he would become meat waiting to be carved

after using this technique.

Now, he could choose between dealing ultimate damage to his enemy by draining all his power with one strike, and striking four times using one fourth of his power each time.

He would have to test the effectiveness of the two methods in future battles against other Qi warriors.

The mysterious changes that had happened to him after he entered the Heaven stage made him very excited. Thus, he went on to test the magics he could cast with the Flame Spirit Incantation.

Only when he discovered that he had spent quite a bit of his spiritual power did he finally stop and recuperate with spirit stones and fire-attributed and wood-attributed spiritual materials.

One after another, they were rapidly drained of energy and reduced to ordinary rubble.

Then, he realized that after breaking into the Heaven stage, the speed at which he absorbed power from spiritual materials had also greatly risen.

In merely two hours, he drained ten spirit stones, six fire-attributed stones, and five wood-attributed materials.

“After entering the Heaven stage, my spiritual sea expanded, and the rotation speed and size of the vortexes in my spiritual sea

increased. The consumption, channeling, and condensation of my spiritual power are also very different from before. Not only that, once my spiritual sea is drained, I'll need ten times as many spirit stones as before to refill it.

“And this is only the Heaven stage...”

The train of thoughts entered Nie Tian's mind as he channeled energy from the spiritual materials. He finally understood why the truly powerful Qi warriors stocked up on spirit jades and spirit crystals, but not spirit stones.

Normally speaking, Qi warriors at the Worldly realm, the Profound realm, and the Soul realm would cultivate or recuperate with spirit jades, since the energy in spirit stones was too miniscule for them.

The spiritual seas of peak Qi warriors in the Void Domain, the Saint Domain, and the God Domain were as vast as oceans. The spiritual power they consumed in every battle was terrifyingly enormous.

Since, according to the legends, they had the ability to move mountains and seas and reshape domains with a mere movement of their fingers, they could only recover strength and cultivate with spirit crystals.

Mixed emotions rose in Nie Tian's heart. “Cultivation is an endless path. Compared to them, I'm only a beginner.”

Before he had finished the process of entering the Heaven stage, the only notion in his mind had been to cultivate wholeheartedly.

That was why he hadn't given any response when he had learned that Cai Yuan was going to save Pei Qiqi's teleportation portal.

He was aware that, being at the Lesser Heaven stage, he didn't have the strength to confront the vicious bandits and Dark Moon members who had roamed the Void Illusion Mountain Range for years.

However, his confidence had greatly improved after stepping into the Heaven stage.

He was now confident that he would be relatively safe in the Void Illusion Mountain Range as long as he didn't encounter any powerful Greater Heaven stage experts.

He even believed that he would be able to easily escape from his next encounter with Hu Han, even if he wouldn't be able to defeat her in battle.

This was all because of the enlightenment he had received from entering the Heaven stage and the new knowledge he had drawn from his various spells and skills.

Therefore, he cast aside Cai Yuan's warning and marched towards the location of Pei Qiqi's teleportation portal, even though he knew that it would be safer to wait for reinforcements from the

## Blood Skull.

He created and unleashed his Heaven Eyes as he marched into a wasted land where no sign of the activities of spirit beasts or humans could be seen.

That was when he noticed that his soul hadn't undergone any noticeable changes after he entered the Heaven stage.

"It seems that the Heaven stage is mainly about the transcendence of the spiritual sea in my dantian, as well as the enrichment and refinement of the different types of power within it. The changes to my soul don't seem to be that significant.

"I need to develop my soul power within the seven fragmentary stars to be able to study the profound mysteries in the middle part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation. When will I be able to do that?

"From the look of it, I'll need to take it step by step, and spend more time studying the first part of the incantation. Only after achieving a thorough understanding of the secret magics recorded there, will I be able to move on to the middle part."

While lost in his thoughts, Nie Tian marched further and further away from the secure zone that Li Ye had marked out for him.

It wasn't long before he came before a mountain valley with several creeks running through it, where numerous spatial rifts

were rapidly slithering in midair and the polluted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth was exceptionally dense.

That was when one of his Heaven Eyes detected two men talking. “I just heard that Ma Jiu of the Dark Moon and his men have surrounded Pei Qiqi of Shatter City and Cai Yuan of the Blood Skull in this area.”

“Yeah, I know. A few brothers returned from this area and said they saw Ma Jiu and his men chasing after Pei Qiqi. I just don’t know how it turned out.”

“Whatever. It’s none of our business. We’re just passing by, so I don’t think they’ll have the time to mind us.”

“Anyhow, let’s get out of here as quickly as possible, lest we get dragged into their battle and killed.”

# Chapter 257: Assassination

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Nie Tian overheard the two men's conversation via one of his Heaven Eyes.

The two of them were constantly glancing around as they marched carefully, two thousand meters away, as if they were afraid that they would run into Ma Jiu and his subordinates.

“What a coincidence! It's them.” Nie Tian found out that they were the men he had met outside his cultivation room at the Blood Skull's headquarters a few days ago.

Back then, they had entered the establishment and paid for a cultivation room while Nie Tian was being confronted by Cai Yue and Shi Qing after stepping out of his cultivation room.

The two early Heaven stage cultivators had examined Nie Tian with strange looks in their eyes, as if they had cooked up some evil plans.

Although Nie Tian was surprised by their appearance in this area, he didn't put much thought into it.

What he truly paid attention to was their conversation.

“The Dark Moon has surrounded Pei Qiqi?! Cai Yuan exposed himself and also became a target?” Nie Tian frowned and picked up his pace as he moved towards the two.



Moments later, he showed up in front of them, blocking their path.

“How do you know that Ma Jiu from the Dark Moon is attacking Pei Qiqi? Where were they last seen? Also, how did Cai Yuan get exposed and become a target?” The moment they met, Nie Tian shot a series of questions that he was rather eager to ask.

“It’s you?!” Both men’s eyes lit up as they discovered that the young man who had showed up out of nowhere was actually the rich kid they had seen at the Blood Skull’s headquarters.

The two of them exchanged a glance as they ignored Nie Tian’s questions and started laughing broadly.

From the way they reacted to seeing Nie Tian, it was as if a warm pie had just fallen out of the heavens and landed in their hands.

Nie Tian was no stranger to the looks in their eyes.

The brothers Qiu Shan and Qiu Shi had the same looks in their eyes when they had met early on, and now their corpses were rotting somewhere in the mountain range after Nie Tian had killed them without breaking a sweat.

“There are always people who seek death!” Nie Tian shook his head and smiled as he reached out with one hand to channel the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

The rich spiritual Qi in the vicinity gathered madly towards his hand as he cast the secret spell.

Only seconds later, a gray, misty spiritual energy ball formed within his palm.

He discovered that the time he just spent to form the spiritual energy ball was much shorter than the time he had spent during his previous battle to help Cai Yuan.

Breaking through into the Heaven stage had indeed enhanced his battle prowess to a great extent. The transcendence of his spiritual sea had greatly sped up the process of channeling spiritual Qi.

Originally, he had always needed to spend a substantial amount of time to form spiritual energy balls, which he had considered to be a major disadvantage of this technique.

However, since the process had now been significantly accelerated, he deemed that that disadvantage had been made up for to a great extent.

Within the gray spiritual energy ball, numerous impurities that were originally from the outer domains immediately began to conflict with each other after being constrained in such a small space.

Even Nie Tian, the spell-caster, couldn't use his psychic awareness to calm the violent movement within the spiritual energy ball.

He had a feeling that if he didn't release the energy ball in a few moments, it would explode within his palm.

"Go!" With a thought, Nie Tian commanded the gray spiritual energy ball to shoot towards one of the men.

The man was still smiling as he said, "We're quite lucky to run into such a fat lamb in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

"I wonder where this kid got the courage to come here alone."

BANG!

The gray spiritual energy ball exploded by itself when it was five meters away from the man.

As it did, countless tiny light dots of gray, green, purple, and black colors rained down from midair, filling a large area.

The moment the condensed impurities made contact with the man's protective light shield, it shattered.

In the next moment, the multicolored lights covered his entire

body, and as a result, he shrunk and collapsed from his standing position like a deflated balloon.

Blood flowed out of his withered corpse and painted the stone ground red.

The man's sudden death greatly shocked the other one. At a loss for words, the man stared at Nie Tian for a while before snapping back to reality and saying, "Have you broken into the Heaven stage?"

Instead of answering his question, Nie Tian asked, "Can you answer my earlier questions now?"

The man said, with a tough expression on his face, "Do you think you can get away with this even if you've entered the Heaven stage? No individuals who aren't members of the Blood Skull, the Dark Moon, or the Wild Fire can beat us in the Void Illusion Mountain Range! Don't you imagine that you can get out of the Void Illusion Mountain Range alive after killing one of us!" With those words, the man turned around and sped off.

From the look of it, he had friends in the vicinity.

"This is so tiring... Why can't people listen?" Nie Tian's eyebrows knitted together.

SHEW!

Although they were both at the early Heaven stage, thanks to his superior physique and spiritual sea, Nie Tian's speed was much faster than his opponent's.

It only took Nie Tian about ten seconds to catch up to the man.

Since it would still require time and stillness to form spiritual energy balls, he gave up the idea.

Rather, he raised his clenched fist and stimulated anger in his heart while he summoned one fifth of his spiritual power, along with small portions of his flame power, wood power, star power, flesh power, and psychic power.

BANG!!!

He bombarded the man's back with enough momentum to shatter mountains.

Upon impact, the man's protective light shield cracked, along with his body!

The man, who was running for his life, actually exploded into pieces after being hit by Nie Tian's fist strike.

Nie Tian came to a stop after watching the man die an extremely miserable death, even more so than his friend, who had been killed by Nie Tian's spiritual energy ball.

“Wow, I can actually kill a fleeing man with merely one fifth of my strength.” Nie Tian smiled broadly as he stepped over and looted his opponents’ bracelets of holding. Without even checking what was inside, he once again unleashed his Heaven Eyes and searched for Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan.

The seven Heaven Eyes gradually fanned out in the sky like seven invisible lanterns.

It wasn’t long before one of them detected two early Heaven stage Qi warriors in Dark Moon garments. The two of them were crouching as they laid spirit stones on the ground, as if they were setting up spell formations to defend against something.

After that, his other Heaven Eyes spotted more Dark Moon members.

A few moments later, one of his Heaven Eyes finally discovered Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan, who were running in the middle of a mountain valley.

Numerous spatial rifts were roaming about and interweaving with each other over their heads, glittering with bright light.

Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan were shifting positions and fighting three Greater Heaven stage Dark Moon members where the spatial rifts were the most active.

Among them, the man with only one good eye was none other than Ma Jiu, the Dark Moon's section leader in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. At that moment, he was calling out to his subordinates, who had formed a blockade around them.

The seven Heaven Eyes quietly floated about, reflecting every detail within a one and a half kilometer radius in Nie Tian's mind.

Nie Tian rapidly obtained a thorough understanding of the situation.

He could see that three Dark Moon members, including Ma Jiu, were chasing after Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan, but they seemed to be preserving their strength and moving carefully.

Even though the three of them were at the Greater Heaven stage, the spatial rifts that were slithering above and around Pei Qiqi stopped them from getting near.

Apparently, it was those spatial rifts that had kept Ma Jiu and his men from approaching Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan.

As a master of spatial magics, Pei Qiqi was constantly shifting her position between numerous spatial rifts, but they never left the area.

After all, she and Cai Yuan were both at the late Heaven stage. Once they lost the protection of the spatial rifts, they wouldn't stand a chance against Ma Jiu and his men.

More than twenty Heaven stage Qi warriors from the Dark Moon were scattered around the perimeter of the mountain valley.

They were there to surround and stop Cai Yuan and Pei Qiqi from leaving the valley.

Even though they weren't strong enough to kill Cai Yuan and Pei Qiqi, they were able to block their path of escape and keep them from heading towards vast open areas where the spatial rifts were more active.

Their goal was to wear out and kill Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan in the valley.

Through his seven Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian obtained a thorough grasp of the situation. He pondered for a moment before making up his mind.

The valley was rather vast, and so was the blockade the Dark Moon had set up.

As long as he acted with caution, he could avoid being spotted by Ma Jiu and the other two with him while he took down their men in the blockade one by one.

It wasn't long before he found a suitable target and closed in on him following his Heaven Eyes.



An early Heaven stage Dark Moon member was squatting on the ground, building a simple spell formation with spirit stones of various attributes. He intended to use it to create a defensive wall, so that Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan wouldn't be able to breakthrough their blockade so easily. As he did, he looked forward to check the distant, spatial rift-filled area from time to time.

WHOOSH!

Nie Tian suddenly charged out from behind a huge rock.

The chaotic magnetic field immediately enveloped the man, causing him to lose control of his limbs.

CRUNCH!

Just as he was about to shout out to his friends, Nie Tian snapped his neck.

Nie Tian bent down and put away the spirit stones the man had used to set up his spell formation before he vanished from that location.

Like a ghost, he moved around the perimeter of the mountain valley.

He used his Heaven Eyes to lock down scattered early Heaven stage Dark Moon members and hid behind the rocks that could be seen everywhere as he furtively approached them. Then, he found

opportunities to swoop in and kill them.

While Ma Jiu and two of his best men were still chasing after Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan in the belly of the mountain valley, Nie Tian had already assassinated nine early Heaven stage Dark Moon members with that method.

After killing them without breaking a sweat, Nie Tian decided to target the middle Heaven stage ones.

## Chapter 258: Call of the Soul

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The assassinations went smoothly. Nie Tian managed to kill every Qi warrior at the same cultivation stage as him with one strike.

Normally speaking, since he had just entered the Heaven stage, he should have encountered strong resistance when he attempted to kill them.

However, he had advantages most of his peers didn't.

Thanks to his Heaven Eyes, he was able to observe his target's every move, and could thus calculate a perfect route so that he wouldn't be discovered as he approached.

Every time he attacked, he struck like a shadow. His victim couldn't even understand how he had showed up out of nowhere.

His chaotic magnetic field could even make Greater Heaven stage experts lose control once it enveloped them, let alone early Heaven stage cultivators.

Then, while they were panic-stricken and about to scream, Nie Tian killed them in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint.

That was why none of his nine victims had been able to scream before they were killed, and Ma Jiu and the other Dark Moon

experts were still unaware of the situation.

Due to the fact that their blockade was sparsely manned and everyone's attention was focused on Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan, none of them were aware that their blockade had already been torn open.

“Middle Heaven stage.” Nie Tian locked down another member of the Dark Moon as he flashed behind the huge rocks that could be seen everywhere in the valley.

SHEW!

Nie Tian charged out from behind a rock that was fairly close to the man, with two gray spiritual energy balls that were already on the verge of bursting in his palms.

“Who's there?” The man asked the moment he saw a human figure coming towards him.

BANG! BANG!

Before he could shout out loud, the gray spiritual energy balls left Nie Tian's palms and exploded in front of the man.

Concentrated outer-domain impurities that looked like tiny raindrops of various colors filled the area where the man stood.

Immediately afterward, Nie Tian arrived and shot numerous

fiery snakes out of his fingers.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

One after another, they penetrated the man's chest, stopping his screams from escaping his mouth.

Then, Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field enveloped the man, causing the already severely injured man to let out a muffled groan and cough up blood.

At that very moment, Nie Tian took another step forward and clenched his hand around the man's neck.

CRUNCH!

After snapping the man's neck, Nie Tian skillfully put away the man's bracelet of holding, along with the spirit stones he had used to set up his spell formation, and soundlessly snuck to his next target.

In the belly of the valley...

Pei Qiqi was leading Cai Yuan as they rapidly flashed through the small gaps between spatial rifts. One wrong move, and they would be cut to pieces by them.

Ma Jiu and two other Greater Heaven stage Dark Moon experts

were chasing after them while maintaining a safe distance between them and the spatial rifts.

Whenever there was an opportunity, they would cast powerful attacking magics or sing-use spiritual weapons to bombard Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan.

Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan could only avoid them by swiftly shifting their positions among the numerous spatial rifts.

After closely avoiding a ball of thunder Ma Jiu had cast towards them, the two of them hid behind three large spatial rifts. Then, Cai Yuan said, “Qiqi, we just need to hang on for a bit longer. Zhao Feng and Wang Zhuo are coming with more of our men. According to my assessment, it’ll take them no more than two days to get here.”

“Okay,” Pei Qiqi replied without much thought.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

A large pack of silver needles flew through the spaces between the spatial rifts and appeared in front of Pei Qiqi.

Not even the slightest panic could be seen on Pei Qiqi’s unearthly beautiful face as a strong wave of spatial fluctuations spread out from within her curvaceous body.

All of a sudden, a thin shield of water appeared and stopped the

silver needles from piercing into her.

Without any delay, she led Cai Yuan to another location where a few spatial rifts were slithering in midair, and once again escaped death.

Although no fear or panic could be seen on Pei Qiqi's face, she actually was quite tired.

For ten days, Ma Jiu and his men had been tailing her in the mountain valley and exhausted their skill set to attack her.

She had been consuming her psychic and spiritual power with every minute that had passed, since she hadn't stopped to rest at all.

Whenever she wanted to stop and recover her strength, Ma Jiu and his men would cast spells or valuable consumptive spiritual weapons to interrupt her.

At that moment, she already knew that she wouldn't be able to last two more days. Her body wouldn't be able to pull through, even though her heart desired it.

If nothing happened in her favor, she would run out of strength within a day.

By that time, she would no longer be able to predict the movements of the spatial rifts, much less skillfully shift their

position among them.

If it came down to that, it would be even more dangerous for them to stay in the spatial rift-filled areas than it would be to face Ma Jiu and his men.

They would be forced to go out and fight Ma Jiu and his men, which wouldn't be much different from jumping into a tiger's den.

She was aware that moment was what Ma Jiu was waiting for.

“Aihh...” Pei Qiqi couldn't help but let out a helpless sigh as she shot a glance at the opening of the valley, her eyes glittering with bright light.

Over these past days, she had made several attempts to approach the opening of the valley.

However, she understood that it must be heavily guarded by members of the Dark Moon.

Even if she and Cai Yuan somehow made it to the opening, they wouldn't be able to kill them and break their blockade quickly enough that they would be gone before Ma Jiu caught up to them from behind.

Let alone that those people had all the time they needed to set up spell formations or make other arrangements to stop them from getting away.



The reason she had to escape through the opening of the valley was that immediately adjacent to it was a extremely vast area where hundreds of spatial rifts were violently active.

Considering her exceptional mastery of spatial magics, as long as she could enter the area, they would be able to lose the Dark Moon people in a short time.

After all, even though Ma Jiu and his men had superior cultivation bases, they weren't familiar with spatial magics. It would be almost impossible to follow Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan through such a dangerous area.

On the other hand, once Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan made their way into that area, they would become like fish that had returned to the ocean, or birds that had been released from their cages.

“But...” At that moment, Pei Qiqi shook her head and snapped out of her wishful thinking. Once again, she refocused on dealing with Ma Jiu and his men.

Meanwhile...

Nie Tian realized what was going on after killing another middle Heaven stage Dark Moon expert at the opening of the mountain valley.

As of that point, Nie Tian had already assassinated nine early

Heaven stage and three middle Heaven stage Dark Moon members. Even though his spiritual sea could hold far more spiritual power than others at his stage, he found himself with only twenty percent of his spiritual power left.

Since he had a rather accurate understanding of his own battle prowess, he was convinced that he wouldn't be able to sneak up and kill another middle Heaven stage enemy.

Fortunately, his Heaven Eyes had allowed him to have a thorough grasp of the situation, so he had already taken out every enemy that had been deployed at the opening of the mountain valley.

Therefore, if Pei Qiqi found an opportunity to forcefully breakthrough the blockade line there while Ma Jiu was slowed down by spatial rifts, she would be able to get out before Ma Jiu caught up to them.

Unfortunately, since they were quite a distance away, they weren't able to get a clear view of the situation over at the opening.

Therefore, they didn't dare to make such rash attempt.

After all, it would mean their doom if they couldn't break the blockade before Ma Jiu and the other two rounded them up from behind.

"I've got to inform them." After pinpointing the problem, Nie

Tian searched his mind for a solution while keeping an eye on Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan's situation.

Personally approaching them and showing them the way wouldn't be an option.

After all, once he did that, he would expose himself to the truly powerful Dark Moon experts.

If Ma Jiu or either of his companions were to go after him, he would have a high chance of getting killed.

The only way to get Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan out of the unfavorable situation without putting himself in danger would be to find a way to inform Pei Qiqi without attracting anyone else's attention.

"How will I be able to do that?" After pondering for a few moments, Nie Tian suddenly thought of the Heaven Eye that had been floating high above and observing Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan.

"Let's hope this works!" He held his breath as he carefully manipulated the invisible Heaven Eye to fly through gaps between numerous spatial rifts before finally coming to a stop right above Pei Qiqi's head.

He concentrated his psychic power and sent a thought to the Heaven Eye, hoping it could relay the message from his soul to Pei Qiqi.

“Pei Qiqi, Pei Qiqi, Pei Qiqi...” One after another, calls that originated from Nie Tian’s soul spread out from within the Heaven Eye. Nie Tian prayed in his heart that Pei Qiqi would receive them.

Nie Tian could only hope that the wisp of mysterious soul power in the Heaven Eye could make miracles happen.

In the area where numerous spatial rifts were slithering in midair...

Just as Pei Qiqi was growing anxious over the tough situation, a voice calling her name suddenly rang out from the depths of her heart.

However, when she calmed herself and focused on listening, she couldn’t hear anything.

That was when she realized that it wasn’t her ears that had received the call. It was her heart.

Puzzled, Pei Qiqi unleashed her psychic power to scan the vicinity, and soon discovered that a mysterious cluster of psychic power was floating over her.

Intrigued, she sent her psychic awareness to gradually infiltrate the psychic power cluster.

When her psychic awareness entered the Heaven Eye and made contact with the wisp of Nie Tian’s soul power that had originated

from the fragmentary stars in his soul, a shudder ran through both her and Nie Tian.

It seemed that at that moment, a profound and mysterious connection had been established between their souls.

# Chapter 259: Escaping A Difficult Situation

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A strange feeling hit Nie Tian the moment the wisp of Pei Qiqi's psychic power entered his Heaven Eye.

In that split second, numerous emotions, including anxiety, impatience, and frustration, rushed out of Pei Qiqi's psychic awareness and into Nie Tian's mind.

Nie Tian immediately saw through Pei Qiqi's mind.

This unprecedented ability astonished Nie Tian to a great extent.

Pei Qiqi, on the other hand, was struck by a feeling that someone was peeking into her mind and seeing through every feeling she was experiencing.

The strange feeling made her both shocked and scared. It even made her hair stand on end.

She felt that she was completely exposed to the cluster of psychic power, and there was no way for her to hide her feelings, but she somehow had a feeling that it meant her no harm.

After the connection was established between their minds, Nie Tian paid close attention as he waited for Pei Qiqi to respond.

However, he felt nothing. Pei Qiqi, who was also at the Heaven

stage, hadn't upgraded her psychic power to soul power yet, and thus wasn't able to conduct a soul-level communication with him.

After a short period of fruitless waiting, Nie Tian realized Pei Qiqi might not be able to communicate.

Therefore, he sent another message via the Heaven Eye that had been floating over Pei Qiqi, "This is Hua Tian."

As soon as the message was relayed by the Heaven Eye, Nie Tian immediately sensed strong fluctuations in Pei Qiqi's psychic awareness.

Astonishment and confusion rushed out of the wisp of Pei Qiqi's psychic power.

That was when Nie Tian realized that even though Pei Qiqi couldn't respond to his thoughts, she was able to receive them.

His new findings greatly lifted his spirit.

Nie Tian explained his plan to Pei Qiqi in detail via his Heaven Eye, "I've already taken out the Dark Moon members that were guarding the opening of the valley, and I've dismantled the barriers they set up, so you won't run into any obstructions.

"You and Cai Yuan should evacuate through there as soon as possible. All you need to do is to use a few spatial rifts to stall Ma Jiu and his two sidekicks. Then, we'll be free to leave the valley

and enter the vast open area where there are even more active spatial rifts.

“I’ll meet you at the opening of the valley.”

He could clearly feel that Pei Qiqi was first shocked, puzzled, and surprised, and then gradually calmed down.

Furthermore, since he could not only perceive Pei Qiqi’s emotions via his Heaven Eye, but also detect the subtle changes of her facial expressions, Nie Tian realized that Pei Qiqi had accepted his proposal.

Afterwards, Nie Tian carefully controlled that Heaven Eye of his to fly away from Pei Qiqi.

After all, a large number of spatial rifts were swimming in midair. Leaving his Heaven Eye there would be very dangerous.

According to his understanding, not only were those spatial rifts destructive to fleshy bodies, but they were also deadly to the intangible psychic awareness.

As his Heaven Eye moved further away from Pei Qiqi, Nie Tian heard her decision, “Let’s break out of the blockade, Cai Yuan!”

The young lord of the Blood Skull seemed surprised as he stared blankly at Pei Qiqi and asked, “Break out? Where?”



Pei Qiqi gave him a hint by shooting a glance at the opening of the mountain valley.

“That place must be heavily guarded by Dark Moon experts. If we don’t get past their blockade before Ma Jiu catches up to us...” Cai Yuan smiled bitterly. “It won’t work, Qiqi. We only need to hold on for a while longer, and our reinforcements will arrive.

“As soon as my Blood Skull brothers arrive, Ma Jiu and his Dark Moon minions will become the prey instead of the hunters!”

Pei Qiqi’s slender eyebrows furrowed as she explained, “But I won’t be able to hold on for two more days. As a matter of fact, if we continue to run and hide like this, I’ll use up all my strength within a day. If it comes down to that, we won’t be able to hide ourselves among the spatial rifts, and if we choose to come out at that point, only death awaits us.”

Upon hearing her words, Cai Yuan’s expression flickered slightly as he fell into silence.

“Trust me.” Pei Qiqi assumed an assertive tone.

Cai Yuan nodded and said, “Alright! I’ll follow your lead and go wherever you go!”

“Good! Make sure you stay close to me at all times.” Pei Qiqi’s ample chest rose as she took a deep breath. Then, she summoned

her remaining strength to manipulate a few spatial rifts that were slithering in her surroundings.

In the next moment, a number of enormous spatial rifts, which were shining with bright light, changed from their original path, and their speed also accelerated noticeably.

Not far behind Pei Qiqi, Ma Jiu watched as the spatial rifts that were originally going to swamp her and Cai Yuan turned around and shot towards the three of them like interweaving lightning bolts.

They hastily shifted their positions to avoid contact.

“Let’s go!” Pei Qiqi shouted as she dashed out from the belly of the mountain valley for the first time in ten days.

Cai Yuan followed her as the two of them whizzed towards the opening of the valley like two shooting stars, one blue and the other black.

With a sinister smile on his face, Ma Jiu said to his two subordinates, “Check this out! They’ve finally come out!

“Pei Qiqi must be running out of strength. Otherwise, she wouldn’t have dared to come out of the spatial rift-filled area. It’s time for us to reap our spoils, my brothers! Pei Qiqi and Cai Lan’s little bastard. We’ve hit gold this time!”

Sinister excitement could be seen on Ma Jiu's subordinates' faces after they heard Ma Jiu's stimulative words.

They were aware that the Dark Moon, as well as the Blood Skull and the Wild Fire, only awarded their members according to their contributions in various operations. Both Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan were very important figures in Shatter City.

Capturing or killing those two would bring them more rewards than killing dozens of Greater Heaven stage experts in battle.

The thought of being able to receive a substantial amount of spirit stones, high-grade spiritual tools, and precious medicinal pills that would help them ascend to the next stage made the two of them unable to contain their joy.

Ma Jiu and his subordinates held their breaths as they meticulously lunged through the spaces between the spatial rifts that were coming at them.

"Stop them!" Ma Jiu shouted loudly towards the opening of the valley as he made his way through the spatial rifts.

His voice was so resounding that it was even able to reach the most distant corners of the mountain valley, let alone the opening of the valley.

Hiding behind a huge rock, Nie Tian yelled at the top of his lungs, "Copy that!"

“Hahaha!” After hearing that someone had responded, Ma Jiu couldn’t help but laugh broadly and say, as he watched the increasingly distant Pei Qiqi from behind, “Pei Qiqi, as smart as you think you are, you’ve made the wrong choice in your moment of peril!”

“You’re still too young, and can’t keep calm at crucial moments!”

“I’ve been intentionally driving you towards that opening. Did you really think I wouldn’t deploy my main force to guard that opening, and would let you pass as you wish?”

Ma Jiu sneered.

From what he could tell, the moment Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan had decided to come out of their safe zone, they had become meat ready to be carved.

“Hmm?” At that moment, Cai Yuan, who was dashing at his maximum speed, recognized Nie Tian’s voice.

Since he had met and talked with Nie Tian before, he realized that it was Nie Tian’s voice the moment he heard it.

The fact that Nie Tian was calling out to them at the opening meant that no Dark Moon member was guarding that location.

In the same way, Pei Qiqi also felt relieved after hearing Nie Tian's voice.

Since the distance between the center and opening of the valley wasn't very far, and Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan were dashing as fast as possible, they arrived within a short time.

Ma Jiu and his two subordinates also paid close attention to the opening of the valley as they avoided the spatial rifts.

However, to their surprise, the fierce battle they had been anticipating didn't occur. Without encountering any resistance, Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan flashed from one huge rock to another before finally disappearing from their sight.

As soon as Pei Qiqi arrived at the opening of the valley, she saw Nie Tian waiting there. Her bright eyes lit up as she slowed down said loudly, "Come with us!"

"You and Cai Yuan stay close beside me! Don't get separated from me by more than half a meter, or you'll be in danger!"

Without waiting for Nie Tian to respond, she picked up her pace again and dashed forward.

Not hesitating for a second, Nie Tian followed.

Still trying to find his way out of the spatial rifts, Ma Jiu realized that something had gone wrong. "No, something's wrong!"

Ma Jiu let out a thunderous roar. “Our blockade is no longer there! Everyone, after them! Don’t let them get away!”

Ma Jiu, who had been taking his time snaking through the spatial rifts, ignored the potential danger after realizing they were going to lose their target, and bolted straight through the network of spatial rifts.

ZZZZZLA!

His left shoulder and right waist touched two slithering spatial rifts, and bloody wounds were immediately cut open.

Ma Jiu bore the pain and urged his two subordinates, “Come on! Get out of there now! We can’t let them leave the valley!”

Those two snapped out of their reverie of receiving handsome awards after returning to their headquarters. They also broke out of the spatial rift-filled area after sustaining a few injuries.

Covered in blood, Ma Jiu shouted, “Go and get them!”

# Chapter 260: Surviving

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Pei Qiqi led Nie Tian and Cai Yuan as the three of them marched forward into a vast area filled with numerous spatial rifts.

Unlike the central area of the mountain valley, it was a plain that stretched as far as the eye could see, and was filled with hundreds of spatial rifts.

Even Pei Qiqi, who was a master of spatial magics, moved among the densely-packed spatial rifts with extreme caution.

Meanwhile, hundreds of meters behind them, Ma Jiu and the other Dark Moon experts were following them relentlessly. Even though every one of them had strong killing intent in their eyes, they marched at a very slow speed.

Not only that, as they marched further and further into the plain, their speed became slower and slower.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Several spatial rifts whizzed past Nie Tian. One of them came only several inches from touching Nie Tian's skin.

Pei Qiqi looked over her shoulder from time to time to make sure Nie Tian and Cai Yuan stayed close enough to her.

CLANK! CLANK!

With every step Nie Tian took, crisp sounds echoed out from within a leather pouch that hung at his waist.

After a while, Cai Yuan finally couldn't resist his curiosity and asked, "What's in there? Why do you keep it in that pouch instead of your bracelet of holding?"

Nie Tian chuckled and said, "I can't store other storage spiritual tools in my bracelet of holding, can I?"

Cai Yuan's expression flickered as he asked, "Storage spiritual tools? All of them?"

Nie Tian didn't utter a word, but rather grabbed the rather sizable leather pouch and opened it under Cai Yuan's gaze.

With a quick glance, Cai Yuan found, to his surprise, that there were more than a dozen bracelets of holding inside the pouch, which meant Nie Tian had killed that many Qi warriors.

Cai Yuan thought for a moment and asked, "All of them belonged to Dark Moon members?"

When he and Pei Qiqi had rushed to the opening of the mountain valley earlier, they hadn't seen a single Dark Moon member, no one but Nie Tian.



That had confused him.

Back when he and Pei Qiqi had been discovered by Ma Jiu and the other Dark Moon members, he had heard Ma Jiu ordering his men to spread out and seal the entire mountain valley.

It was because both he and Pei Qiqi had been aware that the opening of the valley would be heavily guarded that they hadn't dared to break through the blockade there.

However, due to Pei Qiqi's insistence, he had agreed to make a run for it, even though he had prepared himself for strong resistance.

He had never expected that he would see Nie Tian standing alone at the opening of the valley.

The bracelets of holding made Cai Yuan understand why Nie Tian was there by himself, and why Pei Qiqi had suddenly decided to take such a huge risk by abandoning their natural protection.

"Most of them, yeah." Nie Tian answered with a plain tone.

At that moment, even Pei Qiqi, who was navigating by the movement of the spatial rifts, couldn't help but turn to look at Nie Tian.

Both Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan had shock and confusion in their eyes.

They were well-aware that other than the three Dark Moon members who had been chasing after them, all the others were at the Heaven stage.

They couldn't figure out how Nie Tian had managed to kill more than a dozen Heaven stage experts.

"Maybe I should tell you that I've entered the Heaven stage," Nie Tian explained.

"But you're still at the early Heaven stage..." Apparently, Nie Tian's answer didn't resolve Cai Yuan's confusion. "Even though you're now at the early Heaven stage, I've never heard of a man that could kill that many cultivators at his level or at a higher level, no matter what method he used."

Cai Yuan was aware that only a handful of those Dark Moon members were at the early Heaven stage.

The fact that Nie Tian had such a large number of bracelets of holding meant that some of the middle or even late Heaven stage members had also died by Nie Tian's hands.

He couldn't help but marvel at Nie Tian's monstrous achievement.

Eyebrows knit together, Cai Yuan stared at Nie Tian, his gaze

somewhat strange.

Meanwhile, Pei Qiqi was also secretly shocked.

The first time she had met Nie Tian, she had only taken him as a relative of Hua Mu's who had messed up in another realm.

She hadn't assumed Nie Tian was anything different from other men his age, and that was why she had dumped him on Li Ye the moment Hua Mu had left.

Even though their recent trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range had made her change her view of Nie Tian, she only considered him to be a young man who had an outstanding physique.

Since his cultivation base and knowledge regarding equipment forging was still very limited, she didn't attach much importance to him.

However, this was different.

She couldn't help but marvel at the fact that Nie Tian had killed numerous Dark Moon experts at his level and of a higher level under circumstances where his superior physical strength would be next to useless.

After all, she had engaged in countless fierce battles with experts from the Dark Moon and the Wild Fire, and she knew that every

one of them had exceptional skills.

None of them would be any weaker than the disciples of powerful sects in the other realms.

She also knew that the reason why she was able to easily kill cultivators at her level or of a higher level in the Void Illusion Mountain Range was that she was an expert in spatial magics.

However, Nie Tian obviously didn't know a single thing about spatial magics. Yet, his battle prowess was equally formidable. She wracked her brain, but couldn't find an explanation for it.

Cai Yuan looked at Nie Tian and said without blinking, "Hua Tian, if you want, I can trade the spoils you've looted from the Dark Moon experts for you after we return to Shatter City. I can assure you that you'll get the most spirit stones in return this way."

After a brief halt, a hint of a smile appeared at the corner of Cai Yuan's mouth as he continued, "Not only that, I'll make sure that the Blood Skull reward you for your contribution. By killing members of the Dark Moon and the Wild Fire, you've weakened our enemies' strength. It's only right that we reward such actions."

"I can get additional rewards by killing members of the Dark Moon and the Wild Fire?" Nie Tian sounded surprised.

Cai Yuan nodded. “The Dark Moon and the Wild Fire are our only true enemies in the Realm of Split Void. Every death on their part would mean a slight edge on our part. When we’ve built our edge to a certain extent, we’ll wage wars and destroy them. Then, we’ll annex Ash City and the Land of the Abandoned.

“All of our efforts have been for this one goal.”

After a brief pause, he continued, “After we return to our headquarters, I’ll make some arrangements, and get you a guest elder identity medallion.

“With that in your hand, you’ll be like an informal member of the Blood Skull. You won’t have to take orders from us, but everything you loot from your Wild Fire or Dark Moon victims will be traded in at a rate that’s twenty percent higher than the market rate.

“Other than that, you’ll be allowed to take part in our contribution system, and trade your contribution points for spirit stones, spiritual materials, and spiritual tools.”

Pei Qiqi glanced at Nie Tian and said with a plain tone, “That’s quite a generous offer. Becoming a guest elder of the Blood Skull doesn’t mean you have to fight for them. They’d need to ask for your consent to include you in their operations, but you’ll have the right to refuse.

“Of course, if you agree to take on their missions, you’ll be rewarded accordingly.

“Very few people can have that honor and become the Blood Skull’s guest elders. Therefore, Cai Yuan must have respect for you and admire your competence to make you such an offer.”

“If that’s the case, many thanks.” Nie Tian said with a smile.

Cai Yuan went on and explained, “However, there are some major differences between formal members of the Blood Skull and guest elders. For example, formal members don’t have to pay for their stay in Shatter City, and they are free to use our inter-spatial teleportation portals to travel to the Void Illusion Mountain Range or even other realms.

“Since guest elders are basically unbound by any obligations, they don’t enjoy these rights.

“If you want to become a formal member of the Blood Skull, I’ll make arrangements for that as well. It won’t be a problem.”

“No, he can’t join the Blood Skull,” Pei Qiqi frowned and replied on Nie Tian’s behalf. “Someone entrusted him to me.”

“Alright then,” Cai Yuan said with a shrug.

# Chapter 261: A Secret Stronghold

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In a notoriously deadly area of the Void Illusion Mountain Range, where even the strongest spirit beasts didn't dare to enter...

It had already been three days since Ma Jiu had led his men into the area to chase after Pei Qiqi, Cai Yuan, and Nie Tian. Their eager pursuit had caused them a few casualties.

Even still, Nie Tian and his group had gradually disappeared from their sight.

After spending an enormous amount of mental and physical effort, Pei Qiqi finally led Nie Tian and Cai Yuan through the area where no sign of life was seen.

Pei Qiqi let out a sigh of relief and said to Cai Yuan, her voice filled with exhaustion, "You'll have to lead the way for us from now on. We need to find a secluded place that's out of Ma Jiu's reach to recover our strength as soon as possible."

"No problem, Qiqi." Cai Yuan assured her. "You've shouldered the burden for so long. Leave the rest to me."

Having fought in the Void Illusion Mountain Range for years, Cai Yuan knew its complicated terrain like the back of his hand, so he was obviously a much better choice for a guide than Pei Qiqi.

Following his lead, the three of them marched through a few

mountain valleys towards the direction of the Blood Skull's base.

By sundown, Cai Yuan led them to a place that was halfway up a short mountain. As he cast a secret spell, a stone gate opened, leading them into a spacious stone room.

As soon as they entered, Cai Yuan seemed completely relieved as he said, "This is one of our secret strongholds in the mountain range."

He took out and placed some fruits, cooked meat, and water from his ring of holding on a stone table in the middle of the stone room.

Without saying any pleasantries to Cai Yuan, Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi sat down at the table and started munching.

While eating, Nie Tian kept glancing around, and found that not only was the stone room quite spacious, but there was also a special spiritual power ward sealing it from the outside world, which even his Heaven Eye couldn't see through.

Cai Yuan noticed Nie Tian's curious gaze, and thus explained to him, "This stone stronghold was set up by one of our Worldly realm experts. Not only is it completely soundproof, but it also can't be detected by psychic awareness. Even if Qi warriors were searching in the vicinity, as long as their cultivation bases aren't higher than his, they won't be able to discover this place with their psychic awareness.



“Ma Jiu is only at the late Greater Heaven stage, so there’s no way he’ll find us here, not even if he tracked us to this mountain.”

With those words, Cai Yuan rose to his feet and began to set up a delicate, miniature spell formation in a corner of the room.

Nie Tian watched him with a curious gaze and found that, after finishing setting up the spell formation, his lips began to move subtly, as if he were whispering something into the spell formation.

After a short while, Cai Yuan stepped back to the table and with a broad smile, he said, “It’s done. I’ve informed my Blood Skull brothers of our location. Reinforcements are on the way.”

Puzzled, Nie Tian asked, “What’s that spell formation?”

“It’s similar to a Sound Stone.” Since Cai Yuan was in a good mood, he elaborated to Nie Tian, “Sound Stones are very convenient to carry around, but the coverage of their signals is very limited. As for that spell formation, it’s like an upgraded version of a Sound Stone; the signal covers the entire Void Illusion Mountain Range. Therefore, I can use it to communicate with men at our base.

“However, one of its major downsides is that it can’t be stored in a storage spiritual tool.”

At that moment, Pei Qiqi, who was taking small, graceful bites of

a fruit even though she was famished, jumped in and said, “Cai Yuan, Hu Han has exposed the location of my teleportation portal. I need to find a new location to set it up again. Since you know every inch of the Void Illusion Mountain Range, can you help me with that?”

Cai Yuan didn’t even think before promising, “Consider it done!”

Nie Tian seemed puzzled as he asked, “Are there any special requirements regarding the location of a teleportation portal?”

Pei Qiqi looked at him out of the corner of her eyes, as if she was annoyed by his strong, unwitting curiosity.

After noticing her disdainful gaze, Nie Tian rubbed his nose and said with an embarrassed smile, “I’m new to the Realm of Split Void, so it’s understandable that I don’t know certain things.”

“Yeah, it’s true. After all, the Realm of Split Void is different from the other nine realms.” Cai Yuan seemed rather acquainted with Nie Tian as he took the initiative to explain to him, “Normally, there aren’t any special requirements to find a location to set up a teleportation portal. For example, technically, the inter-spatial teleportation portal in Shatter City can be set up anywhere within the city.

“The only reason it was set up in the central square was to make it easy for its users, so that people from every corner of the city can get to it fairly easily.

“However, it’s different within the Void Illusion Mountain Range

“In here, there are too many spatial rifts here, and the fluctuations of spatial energy are also very unstable. Therefore, not only is it very hard to set up a teleportation portal here, but a suitable location also needs to be selected.

“It’s not like Qiqi can take all the necessary materials and set it up in a random location. It doesn’t work like that.”

Nie Tian nodded and said, “Oh, I see.”

“Alright, I don’t have the time to chit chat with you two. I need to recover my strength as soon as possible.” After eating nothing but a few fruits, Pei Qiqi moved to a distant location in the stone room, where she sat down and began to recover her spiritual and psychic power with medicinal pills and spirit stones.

“Okay, Hua Tian, if there’s anything you’d like to know, we can talk after we get our strength back.” With those words, Cai Yuan also found a place to sit down and start cultivating.

After seeing both of them recuperating silently, Nie Tian quietly cleaned out every bit of food and water left on the table. Only then did he begin to recover his strength with spirit stones.

During the process, he gradually had a feeling that the fruits and meat he had just consumed contained rich energy, as he could feel wisps of flesh power being generated in his stomach, which soon

spread to every muscle and bone in his body.

That was when he realized that the food Cai Yuan had provided didn't consist of ordinary fruits and meat.

Even though he had killed more than a dozen Dark Moon experts, the strength he had consumed was far less than Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan, who had drained their spiritual seas.

Hence, he recovered faster than the other two.

When he felt that his spiritual sea was brimming with spiritual power and he was full of spirit, he found that both Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan were still in the middle of their cultivation. From the look of it, they wouldn't wake up within a short time.

Slightly bored, he grabbed his leather pouch from his waist and poured out all the bracelets of holding inside before he emptied them on the stone floor.

Moments later, a substantial amount of spiritual materials, spirit stones, and medicinal pills piled up in front of him.

Then, he took out the ring of holding he had looted from Yang Ling from within his inner garment pocket, and stored all the spirit stones and spirit jades in it.

As he did, he counted 7,000 spirit stones and 13 spirit jades.

Those Heaven stage cultivators must have prepared those spirit jades for their future breakthroughs.

Afterwards, he picked out and put away all the fire-attributed and wood-attributed spiritual materials in his ring of holding.

To his surprise, he also discovered eight peculiar rocks that contained star power within the pile of items.

They were all grayish-brown and surprisingly heavy, with bright sparks shining inside.

Since all of them came from one bracelet of holding, Nie Tian wondered how that Qi warrior had obtained them. Nevertheless, it was his lucky day to gain such a rare fortune.

Then, he singled out a handful of relatively high-level fire-attributed and wood-attributed spell scrolls from the pile and stored them away.

Finally, he selected and added a few medicinal pills that could help him temper his fleshy and psychic strength to his ring of holding.

After one last check, he was certain that there wasn't anything he needed left in the pile of items.

Then, he went on and stored everything on the floor within some of the bracelets of holding, as he prepared to entrust Cai Yuan to convert them into spirit stones.

As Nie Tian examined the valuables inside his ring of holding with a wisp of psychic awareness, a smile appeared at the corner of his mouth, and a feeling that he had finally become rich rose from the bottom of his heart. “The Void Illusion Mountain Range indeed is a Blessed Land for me!”

He believed that with such a large amount of spirit stones in his possession, he would be able to live any sort of life he wanted in Shatter City for a long time. His former spirit stone shortage would no longer be an issue.

While he was feeling complacent with himself, Pei Qiqi awoke from her cultivation.

Watching him sort through the bracelets of holding with a face filled with smiles, Pei Qiqi said with a disdainful tone, “Petty man.”

“What?!” Nie Tian blurted with a puzzled expression.

“Adding every spirit stone, spiritual material, medicinal pill, and spell scroll together, it won’t be worth more than 30,000 spirit stones,” Pei Qiqi said with a taunting tone. “It’s only barely enough for Li Ye to gather the materials and forge a Premium grade spiritual tool that suits you.”

“A Premium grade spiritual tool that suits me!” A thought was born in Nie Tian’s mind.

# Chapter 262: A Helping Hand

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Ever since he was a boy, Nie Tian had learned that a suitable spiritual tool could greatly enhance a Qi warrior's battle prowess.

Later, the appearance of the Flame Dragon Armor had further proved this point.

However, other than the Flame Dragon Armor, he hadn't come across another spiritual tool that truly agreed with him.

He had won every battle by only relying on the secret magics he had learned from the mysterious land and his shockingly sturdy physique.

He was convinced that if he could find a spiritual tool that completely agreed with him, his battle prowess would rise to a whole other level.

Even though the Flame Dragon Armor was a Spirit Channeling grade spiritual tool that had unparalleled power, he currently didn't have the ability to wear it.

More importantly, the Flame Dragon Armor was too eye-catching. If he used it in battle but failed to kill his opponents, its whereabouts would be exposed, along with Nie Tian's identity.

If it came down to that, powerful experts from both the Flame God Sect and the Heaven Palace Sect would flood the Realm of



Split Void, and strip him of his Flame Dragon Armor and two fragmentary star marks.

Therefore, he currently didn't have a single suitable spiritual tool that he could use.

It was hard to say if Pei Qiqi had meant to taunt him or remind him. Nonetheless, Nie Tian felt suddenly enlightened. "A Premium grade spiritual tool..."

In the next moment, Nie Tian looked at Pei Qiqi, his eyes filled with confusion, as he asked, "Is Li Ye capable of forging Premium grade spiritual tools?"

Pei Qiqi nodded. "Yeah. He successfully forged a Premium grade spiritual tool right before I came here. He's joined the ranks of Premium grade equipment forgers."

"Premium grade equipment forger!" Nie Tian was shocked by her words.

All the best equipment forgers in the Realm of Flame Heaven who were able to forge Premium grade spiritual tools were in the Spiritual Treasure sect.

Gan Kang's identity as a Premium grade equipment forger was why he had dared to do whatever he wanted and press An Shiyi to marry him.

It was also why, after the Spiritual Treasure sect's incident, the Flame God Sect from the Realm of Dark Underworld made a very generous offer to him.

For any sect or force, Premium grade equipment forgers were extremely important resources.

It was hard to believe that Li Ye could rise to such a high level at such a young age. His equipment forging talent was utterly amazing.

Pei Qiqi continued, "If you want to have a Premium grade spiritual tool custom-made for you, you'll have to pay a very high price, much higher than the price of the Premium grade spiritual tools you can purchase from the Blood Skull's headquarters."

Then, Pei Qiqi glanced at Nie Tian, and realized that he might not be familiar with the spiritual tool market. Thus, she explained, "There are many shops in Shatter City that sell spiritual tools, and quite a few of them have Premium grade spiritual tools for sale.

"Most of them go for ten thousand spirit stones, give or take.

"However, with those kind of Premium grade spiritual tools, even if they match the buyers' cultivation attributes, they won't be able to display their ultimate might.

"More often than not, those Premium grade spiritual tools were originally custom-made for someone else, and after that person

died, they drifted to Shatter City after several transactions.

“Therefore, a Premium grade spiritual tool of that kind is usually worth around ten thousand spirit stones.”

After a pause, she added, “On the other hand, if you want a Premium grade equipment forger to customize a Premium grade spiritual tool that matches your cultivation attribute, as well as your physical and psychic traits, it would, at the very least, be triple that price.

“So if you want Li Ye to customize one for you, you’d have to pay him with everything you’ve obtained in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and that’s already a discounted price, since you’re his friend.

“Not to mention that it won’t be a guaranteed success.

“It’s just funny to see how complacent you are with yourself after acquiring such a puny amount of wealth.” Pei Qiqi said with a cold smile.

After hearing her words, Nie Tian forced a smile and stuffed all the bracelets of holding back into his leather pouch, saying, “I seems that I need to kill more powerful Dark Moon experts.”

Pei Qiqi snorted disdainfully and didn’t say a word. She took out a few Space Spirit Jades and started working on a delicate spell formation.

She held one Space Spirit Jade in her hand, and wisps of spiritual power began to flow out of her fingertips and seep into the Space Spirit Jade. They swam inside of the jade as if they were engraving tiny but detailed spell formations.

Off to the side, Cai Yuan was still recuperating with his eyes clenched. There were no signs of him awakening.

“She consumed more strength than Cai Yuan, but somehow recovered much faster than him.” Nie Tian watched Pei Qiqi with a measuring gaze, as he felt that she was a girl veiled by numerous mysteries.

Seeing that both Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan were busy with their own business, Nie Tian took out more spirit stones and concentrated on another session of cultivation.

After all, now that he had entered the Heaven stage, he could conduct new rounds of expansion and refinement to his spiritual sea.

His original plan had been to devote all his time and efforts to studying the profound knowledge recorded within the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation after ascending to the Heaven stage.

However, considering that Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan were in the same stone room as him, he was afraid that they would pick up some clues if he studied it now. Thus, he could only postpone it.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

After an unknown period of time, gentle knocking sounds rang out from the gate of the stone room.

Cai Yuan immediately sprang to his feet and spoke, while his eyes shone with the light of excitement, “Our reinforcements are here!”

Before Pei Qiqi and Nie Tian could react, he had already rushed to the entrance, raised the spiritual power ward, and opened the gate.

“Young Lord!”

“Little Lord!”

“Lord Cai!”

“Brother!”

The moment the gate was opened, numerous calls echoed into the originally silent stone room, among which Nie Tian recognized Zhao Feng and Wang Zhuo’s voice.

The last call that entered Nie Tian’s ears sounded familiar too. After a brief search in his mind, he realized that it was Cai Yue’s voice, whom he had met at the Blood Skull’s headquarters.

Just as both Pei Qiqi and Nie Tian cast wondering gazes towards the entrance to the stone room, Cai Yuan reached out with one hand and stopped the Blood Skull members from entering, saying, “We’re coming out. Wait for us at the foot of the mountain.”

With those words, he turned to look at Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi.

After receiving his beckon, the two of them stepped out of the secret stone room and followed Cai Yuan to the foot of the mountain, where approximately ten Blood Skull members were waiting.

Aside from Wang Zhuo and Zhao Feng, Nie Tian also identified Shi Qing in the crowd, who was standing next to Cai Yue, as it seemed that he was here to protect her.

Amongst the crowd of Blood Skull members, there was only one late Greater Heaven stage expert, whose name was Gu Yu, the commander of the Blood Skull’s branch in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. All the others were at the Heaven stage.

“Greetings, Miss Pei.” Upon seeing Pei Qiqi, many Blood Skull members cast respectful gazes towards her.

Only Cai Yuan’s sister, Cai Yue, looked rather sullen, as if she was very displeased to see Pei Qiqi.

“I knew it!” Cai Yue thought. “It’s all because of this woman.

Otherwise, my brother wouldn't have risked his own life and acted so rashly!" Anger filled Cai Yue's face as she stared at Pei Qiqi without saying a word, as if she was going to march over and denounce her in front of everyone in the next moment.

She knew that her brother had always admired and liked Pei Qiqi, and repeatedly put himself in danger to protect her.

If it weren't for the fact that Cai Yuan was resourceful and lucky, he would have been killed years ago.

For that reason, Cai Yue had sought out Pei Qiqi to reason with her more than once. Every time, it would escalate into a squabble, and would only come to an end after elders from the Blood Skull showed up to intermediate.

Seeing that Cai Yuan was unscathed, Gu Yu assumed that it was thanks to Pei Qiqi and her expertise in spatial magics. "Thank you, Miss Pei," he said.

"The Dark Moon has been quite active recently." Shi Qing said with a frown. "It appears they didn't learn their lesson from our last confrontation. I've already arranged for our brothers to search for Ma Jiu in this region. They'll inform me the moment they find their trail."

"Exactly, we have to strike back even though you're fine!" Gu Yu said with great determination in his tone.

Since they all knew Pei Qiqi was a master of spatial magics and how powerful she could be in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, they naturally assumed it was Pei Qiqi who had killed a number of Dark Moon members and kept Cai Yuan safe.

Not a single one of them paid much attention to Nie Tian, including Shi Qing and Cai Yue, who had met him before.

Shi Qing was the only one who greeted Nie Tian by nodding briefly toward him, before he rapidly joined everyone else as they gathered around Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan, asking about what had happened.

Surrounded by people, Pei Qiqi, who had remained silent the whole time, said with a plain tone, “Actually, it was thanks to Hua Tian that we escaped from those Dark Moon people.”

Cai Yuan nodded. “She’s right.”

Only after hearing those words did everyone turn to look Nie Tian up and down with confused gazes.



# Chapter 263: Identity Medallion for A Guest Elder

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“Hua Tian?” Although Shi Qing and Cai Yue had both met Nie Tian before at the Blood Skull’s headquarters, their only impression of him was no more than a peculiar young man who had somehow upset the spiritual energy in the Lesser Heaven cultivation rooms.

Neither of them took Nie Tian as a resourceful and competent man.

Therefore, they had never attached much importance to him.

However, Wang Zhuo and Zhao Feng had recently witnessed Nie Tian beat enemies in battle, so they didn’t seemed very surprised.

All the other Blood Skull experts, including Gu Yu, hadn’t even heard of Nie Tian before. Thus, it was only natural that they seemed rather confused.

What could an early Heaven stage young man possibly rely on to rescue Pei Qiqi, who was known as a supreme fighter in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and their young lord?

Under everyone’s gazes, Nie Tian seemed surprisingly calm. He shrugged and said with a modest tone, “Actually, I only did what I could, which was next to nothing.”

Cai Yuan chuckled, as he didn't intend to give a further explanation. Rather, he turned to Gu Yu and asked, "Uncle Gu, do you have an identity medallion for a guest elder on you?"

Gu Yu went blank for a brief moment before taking out an identity medallion and handing it to him. "What do you need it for?"

Cai Yuan grabbed the command medallion and took a deep breath. Then, with a solemn expression on his face, he presented it to Nie Tian and said, "Hua Tian, as the young lord of the Blood Skull, I officially offer you the position of a guest elder of the Blood Skull. Here's your identity medallion. It's a token of your status!"

After seeing Cai Yuan make such a earnest offer, all of the Blood Skull members' expressions flickered.

Normally, the Blood Skull had rules regarding making someone their guest elder. A strict assessment of the candidate was usually mandatory.

In the Blood Skull's eyes, they would only give such an honor to truly powerful figures, who they deemed they couldn't afford to offend and wanted to draw to their side.

Up to this day, they had never invited an early Heaven stage Qi warrior to be their guest elder.

Nie Tian was an exception.

If it weren't Cai Yuan, who had presented the identity medallion to Nie Tian, Gu Yu and Shi Qing might have already stepped in and interrupted.

However, both Gu Yu and Shi Qing placed great trust and respect in Cai Yuan, and believed that his decisions were usually well-founded, except when they involved Pei Qiqi.

Cai Yuan must have his reasons.

"Thanks." Nie Tian took the identity medallion and, under everyone's gaze, put it away without even taking a close look at it.

"Great! We're on the same boat now." Cai Yuan smiled and turned to Gu Yu, saying, "The targets of this Dark Moon operation were Qiqi and her teleportation portal."

He went on to explain the situation to Gu Yu and Shi Qing in detail, but he downplayed the part where they had escaped from Ma Jiu and his men.

"The Dark Moon sent many of their best warriors to kill us," Cai Yuan said with a smile. "Yet, not only did they return empty-handed, they've even lost quite a few of their own. Uncle Gu, I deem that now that you're here, we might as well give them a lesson they won't forget! "They deserve our counterattack for making such a move on me and Qiqi!"

Gu Yu nodded and agreed, “We definitely can’t just pretend it didn’t happen.”

Afterwards, Gu Yu, Shi Qing, and Cai Yuan had a private discussion regarding their operation against the Dark Moon.

As they did, Gu Yu took out a Sound Stone and communicated with the Blood Skull members he had sent to search for Ma Jiu and his Dark Moon members, telling them to report back as soon as they found anything.

Since Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi didn’t participate in the discussion, they glanced around with bored expressions on their faces.

At that moment, Cai Yue, who was dressed as a young man, quietly approached Pei Qiqi, and whispered to her while staring into her eyes, “It’s because of you again! Otherwise, my brother wouldn’t have been trapped in such a perilous situation! How many times have you put him in danger already? If my brother ever gets hurt because of you again, I won’t let you off!”

Cai Yue unleashed her protest so fiercely that she looked like a baby tiger, baring fangs and brandishing claws towards Pei Qiqi.

Pei Qiqi, however, raised her chin to look up into the sky, showing her slender, jade-like neck, but didn’t utter a word. She treated Cai Yue like nothing more than air.

Seeing Pei Qiqi give no response, Cai Yue became even angrier,

but she was aware that she actually couldn't do anything to her.

Rage burning in her heart, Cai Yue shifted her gaze and saw Nie Tian, who was staring at her from the side, as if he was enjoying a show.

“What are you looking at!?” Immediately, she made Nie Tian her target. “Our business isn't over yet! It was because you stole spiritual Qi from my cultivation room and undermined my cultivation that I failed to enter the Heaven stage according to my schedule. And because of that, they won't allow me to join their operations in the Void Illusion Mountain Range!

“How do you intend to compensate me for causing me so much trouble?”

Nie Tian was confused as to how he was involved as he asked, “What?! Didn't I pay extra spirit stones? What do I have to do with the fact that you haven't entered the Heaven stage?”

“Say what you may, it's because of you!” Cai Yue said in an arbitrary fashion.

Upon hearing their conversation, Pei Qiqi, who was still looking up, shot a curious glance at Nie Tian while one of her eyebrows rose.

Nie Tian frowned, as he was tired of Cai Yue's rudeness and unreasonability. “What do you want?”

Just as Cai Yue was going to open her mouth, Gu Yu's frustrated voice rang out, "Our men encountered a few Shatter City residents who they said they saw a band of Dark Moon members rushing back to their base."

Gu Yu let out a snort and continued, "Those cowards only dare to act stealthily. They probably knew we were coming and thus retreated."

"Yeah, now that they've returned to their nest, there's really not much we can do." Shi Qing said with a grim face.

At that moment, Nie Tian said with a casual tone from the side, "Don't you know the location of their base? Why don't we march over there and eliminate them?"

Upon hearing his comments, many Blood Skull members rolled their eyes at him, as if he was a fool.

Cai Yuan, however, knew that Nie Tian was new to the Realm of Split Void and didn't understand certain things, so he explained to Nie Tian with a smile, "Hua Tian, just like us, the Dark Moon also has a teleportation portal in their base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, through which they can bring in powerful experts from their headquarters in the Land of the Abandoned at any time.

"Therefore, they'll be able to deploy heavy forces to defend their base once we attack it.

“By that time, I’m afraid, with the men we have, we won’t even be able to make it back alive.”

After hearing those words, Nie Tian felt enlightened. He nodded and admitted he hadn’t been aware of that.

“Actually, It’s not totally impossible.” Pei Qiqi’s voice echoed out. “I recently made a breakthrough in my mastery of spatial magics. With the copious amount of Space Spirit Jades I’ve obtained lately, I think I can shut down their teleportation portal for some time.

“Thus, we’ll be able to wipe them out during that period of time. There won’t be a problem as long as we get out of there before their teleportation portal turns back on.”

Like a sharp razor, a cold light shot out of Pei Qiqi’s glittering eyes, which were as bright as stars.

Upon seeing Pei Qiqi’s gaze, everyone present knew that Pei Qiqi had truly been angered by the Dark Moon, and she was determined to go all-out to fight them.

Cai Yuan took the initiative to state his stance on the matter by saying to Shi Qing and Gu Yu, “I think this is doable! Their force in the Void Illusion Mountain Range just suffered a significant loss. We have the upper hand now. Plus, if we act fast enough, we may catch up to Ma Jiu and his men before they can return to their base, and kill them while they’re exhausted and weak.

“Then, we can have Qiqi shut down their teleportation portal while we take out every single one of them within their base. After that, we withdraw.”

“Big brother, you’re being stupid again!” Cai Yue called out.

Gu Yu pondered for a moment, then turned to look at Shi Qing with a beckoning gaze. “What do you say, Brother Shi?”

Shi Qing hesitated as he turned to Pei Qiqi and asked with a serious tone, “Miss Pei, do you have confidence that you’ll be able to shut down their teleportation portal for some time?”

Pei Qiqi nodded in reply.

Shi Qing took a deep breath and said to Gu Yu, “I reckon it’s worth a shot.”

Gu Yu laughed out loud and said, “Good! The hunt is on, Dark Moon cowards! With Miss Pei’s help, we’ll march on the Dark Moon’s base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and burn it to the ground!”

Inspired by Gu Yu’s words, every Blood Skull member showed soaring fighting spirit.

“Let’s go!”



# Chapter 264: The Greedy Aura

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Two days passed, and it was deep into the night...

Water-like moonlight and diamond-like stars decorated the night sky.

A band of Blood Skull experts were sitting on the ground among numerous oddly-shaped, huge rocks.

After marching for two days straight, many of them had consumed a significant amount of spiritual power, and thus had to stop to recover with spirit stones.

The poisonous spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth filled every corner of the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Fortunately, since every Blood Skull member had their own protective spiritual tool, they didn't have to worry about it.

However, every one of them had spent an enormous amount of spiritual power traveling at a high speed, hoping to catch up to Ma Jiu and his men and raid their base within the shortest time possible.

The higher their cultivation base, the less spiritual power they consumed, therefore the easier it was for them to recover.

All the Heaven stage Blood Skull members spent a long time replenishing their spiritual power with spirit stones.

Dressed in simple yet pretty blue battle garments, Pei Qiqi was sitting with her back against a large rock, looking at the vast starry sky, her mind drifting away.

Showered in bright, silky moonlight, her jade-like skin seemed to be wreathed in a shimmering, precious luster.

It was like a beautiful, painted scroll that was emanating an enigmatic power.

Several meters away, Cai Yuan, who was talking to his sister in a soft voice, couldn't help but shoot a glance towards her. Infatuation could be seen in his eyes as his gaze landed on Pei Qiqi's desirable physique.

Cai Yue, however, glowered at him, hating him for being so vulnerable to Pei Qiqi's charisma.

In her eyes, her brother was without doubt the most talented young man in Shatter City, or even the entire Realm of Split Void.

Ever since she was a little girl, she had admired her brother, and wanted to temper her battle prowess in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and win the respect of the Blood Skull elders like her brother had.

However, since she was a girl, her father, Cai Lan, had never had the heart to let her do that, and thus ordered her to stay in Shatter

City at all times.

Even if she acted on her own and went to the Void Illusion Mountain Range, powerful experts would always be there to accompany her in case she encountered danger.

She was so envious of her brother's life that she even dressed herself as a boy on most occasions.

Therefore, seeing her precious big brother repeatedly risk his own life to save Pei Qiqi, she felt as if someone had pierced her heart with a knife.

She believed that it was because of this woman that her brother was no longer flawless.

Cai Yue pursed her lips and said with a disdainful expression on her face, "What do you see in her, big brother? She's nothing but a woman who's a bit good-looking and knows some spatial magics.

"She's got a terrible temper; she doesn't get along with people and she won't make a virtuous wife. Why do you like a woman like her?"

Cai Yuan fondled her hair in a doting fashion and said with a smile, "You're still a kid. You don't understand."

"What's there to understand?" Cai Yue let out a snort as she pushed away his hand and said angrily, "I'm already a grown-up!

I'll soon enter the Heaven stage and be at the same level as you. Don't you take me as a child! I know everything! That woman plays her little games with you just because you're the young lord of the Blood Skull; she wants to use you!"

"It's not like that." Cai Yuan's eyebrows furrowed as he said, "She's never asked me to do anything for her. I only did those things because of myself, because I wanted to be around her. As a matter of fact, she's turned me down more than once, but I..."

With those words, Cai Yuan let out a sigh and said, melancholy filling his face, "Alright, alright, you just need to understand she has nothing to do with my decisions. I know that I might be after the wrong girl. She doesn't belong to the Realm of Split Void, much less Shatter City. Sooner or later, she'll definitely leave this place.

"Perhaps, I can only untie the knots in my heart and give up to fate when she's gone."

Cai Yue said angrily, "I wish she would leave as soon as possible!"

With another sigh, Cai Yuan shot a glance at Pei Qiqi, his heart filled with bitterness and helplessness.

At that moment, Pei Qiqi, who had been staring into the sky for a long while, suddenly asked without turned her head, "When will Mr. Hua come back?"

Sitting next to her, Nie Tian was ripping apart and munching on large pieces of spirit beast meat. With a full mouth and bulging cheeks, he mumbled, “I don’t know.”

Pei Qiqi’s gaze landed on Nie Tian. Watching him wolf down his food, she frowned and said in her heart, “What a bottomless pit!”

Although she had been wallowing in her thoughts, she had taken note that Nie Tian had been eating for a long time. She had always considered her junior martial brother, Li Ye, to be a glutton, and often mocked him because of it.

However, compared to Nie Tian, he was nothing.

Pei Qiqi intentionally lowered her voice and said, “Do you know that Mr. Hua doesn’t have many years left?”

Nie Tian chewed up the meat in his mouth and washed it down with a gulp of water. Then, he nodded and said, “Yeah, I know, and he’s been looking for a way to solve that problem.”

Shaking her head, Pei Qiqi said, “If only it were that easy. If you can, encourage him to stay in Shatter City for the last period of his life next time you see him. Because of him, my master travels all year long, searching from place to place for a solution for him. However, last time he was here, he didn’t even spare a few minutes to see my master. My master was very disappointed.”

“You don’t need to worry too much,” Nie Tian said. “He’s already

found a way to extend his lifespan. He just needs a little more time for it to work.”

Of course, Pei Qiqi didn't know that Nie Tian was the very solution Hua Mu had found for himself, and that Nie that Tian would be able to use his mysterious bloodline talent to extend Hua Mu's lifespan when his cultivation base was high enough and his bloodline was developed to a certain degree.

“He's found a way already?” Shock could be seen in Pei Qiqi's eyes. “How can you be so certain?”

Nie Tian smiled and said, “He told me himself.”

“If only that...” Pei Qiqi remained skeptical as she asked after a moment of hesitation, “How did you manage to transmit your soul intent to me via a cluster of psychic power back when we were in the valley? Also, that cluster of psychic power seemed rather strange. I've never seen anything like it.”

“I practice a special psychic incantation. Sorry, I'd rather not disclose any more details about it.” Nie Tian said.

“...Good, a guy who likes to deliberately mystify things.” Pei Qiqi said coldly.

“Yee?!” At that moment, Nie Tian suddenly experienced a feeling that rich flesh power was being generated within his stomach. Just as the wisps of rich flesh power that had originated from the spirit

beast meat slowly flowed towards his limbs, the green aura that had been coiled at the bottom of his heart grew greedy.

Very soon, the wisps of flesh power seemed to have been attracted by a giant magnet and converged toward Nie Tian's heart!

As soon as they entered Nie Tian's heart, they were violently pulled toward and swallowed by the green aura.

"What's happening?" After sensing things for a short while, Nie Tian's eyes lit up as he learned what was happening to him.

When he had entered the Heaven stage, not only had his spiritual sea had undergone great changes, but imperceptible changes had also occurred to his fleshy body.

Not long ago, when he had used the Blood Refining Incantation to refine and absorb the flesh essence from the Golden Stone Rhino's blood, he felt that he had filled himself to the point where he couldn't absorb another smidgen of flesh power.

However, during the last few days, every time he had consumed food, the newly-generated flesh power had rapidly dispersed into his muscles and bones.

Evidently, his body was now ready for new rounds of tempering.

Similarly, since the green aura that had coiled at the bottom of

his heart once again became violently active and competed with the other parts of his body for the flesh power, it meant that it was also ready for a new upgrade.

After coming to this realization, Nie Tian quietly took out the Blood Pill Li Jing had given him before he had left the Realm of Flame Heaven and stuffed it down his throat.

While the other Blood Skull members were replenishing their spiritual power with spirit stones, Nie Tian secretly stimulated the efficacy of the Blood Pill.

Copious amounts of flesh power continuously poured into the green aura in his heart. It wasn't long before every last wisp of flesh power was devoured by it.

However, the green aura was still swimming without even stopping for a second, as if it was still waiting for more food so that it could grow into a gigantic python that could engulf Heaven and Earth.

“Alright! Let's move out!” At that moment, Gu Yu's voice rang out, urging everyone to hasten on with their march towards the Dark Moon's base.



## Chapter 265: A Drop in the Bucket

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During the following two days, Nie Tian followed the Blood Skull members as they marched toward the Dark Moon's base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. As they did, Gu Yu arranged for his men to investigate Ma Jiu's whereabouts through various approaches.

A large number of Qi warriors who lived in Shatter City would explore the Void Illusion Mountain Range from time to time.

Most of them kept relatively close relationships with the Blood Skull. Therefore, when the Blood Skull scouts asked them for information regarding the Dark Moon's trail, they were usually able to obtain truthful answers.

Today, Gu Yu learned the rough location of Ma Jiu and his men from one of the scouts he had sent out.

Then, they stopped in a place where numerous spatial rifts floated in the air, so that Gu Yu could discuss their next move with Shi Qing, Cai Yuan, and Pei Qiqi.

Since Nie Tian didn't have the qualifications to participate in their discussion, he stood quite a distance away and contemplated.

"Bloodline power..." Eyes narrowed, Nie Tian quietly sensed the subtle changes within his own body.

During the past few days, he had consumed a substantial amount of the second grade spirit beast meat he had stocked up in his bracelet of holding.

Whenever there was a chance, he would intentionally separate himself from the rest of the group and refine a barrel of the Golden Stone Rhino's blood.

At this point, he had used up all the spirit beast meat he had reserved from the Realm of Flame Heaven, as well as all the Golden Stone Rhino's blood.

Every bit of flesh power had been pulled away and devoured by the green aura coiled in his heart the moment it was generated.

In his eyes, that slender green aura was like an abysmal creature that was never satisfied.

The essence of flesh the spirit beast meat and Golden Stone Rhino's blood had provided was like a drop in the bucket, far from enough to feed this monster.

He had a distinct feeling that only when it was satisfied, would it calm down and, after lying dormant for a period time, give birth to a new bloodline talent.

However, Nie Tian had already run out of everything that contained flesh power, including the medicinal pills he had previously obtained.

Stimulated by the green aura's yearning, Nie Tian once again searched within his ring of holding and bracelet of holding.

After a thorough examination, he found that the only remaining thing he had that could provide flesh power was the Golden Stone Rhino's meat. "This is all there's left."

According to Li Ye and Pei Qiqi, all the spirit beasts that roamed in the Void Illusion Mountain Range had been tainted by the poisonous spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth. Because of that, both their blood and flesh carried various sorts of deadly impurities, and thus was no longer edible to humans. That had been the reason why Pei Qiqi had only taken the Golden Stone Rhino's horn and skin.

No one would spend a single spirit stone on a tainted spirit beast's blood and meat, no matter how high-leveled the spirit beast was.

"I can only try it and see." After a moment of pondering, Nie Tian assumed that since his body had proven to be different from others', perhaps he would be able to absorb the rich flesh power from the meat of this fourth grade spirit beast, and thereby fulfill the green aura's needs.

He made up his mind that next time he had a chance, he would try some of the Golden Stone Rhino's meat.

Afterwards, he paid attention to the conversation between Pei

Qiqi and the Blood Skull members from a certain distance away, and learned what they were discussing.

According to their current knowledge, the route Ma Jiu and his men had taken didn't lead them straight back to their base.

In this situation, Gu Yu faced two options: chase after and strike Ma Jiu and his band, or raid the Dark Moon's base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

If they chose to chase after and attack Ma Jiu, they would have a great chance of dealing a significant blow to Ma Jiu and his band. However, it wasn't likely that they would be able to wipe out all of them.

Once they let Ma Jiu escape, he would communicate with his men at their base and assemble powerful experts from the Land of the Abandoned using their teleportation portal.

Once that happened, not only would they be forced to abort their plan to attack the Dark Moon's base, but they would also have to retreat as fast as possible.

On the other hand, if they chose to lead a direct raid on the Dark Moon's base and have Pei Qiqi use her spatial magics to shut down their teleportation portal, they would be able to start a bloodbath.

However, they weren't sure how many Dark Moon experts were stationed at their base.

If there were too many of them, even though they could go all-out to attack the Dark Moon's base while their teleportation portal was deactivated by Pei Qiqi, they might not be able to take out every Dark Moon defender within that limited timeframe.

Whenever the teleportation portal was fully functioning again, they would have to retreat.

Unless they got lucky and the Dark Moon's base was poorly manned.

However, even if things worked out at the Dark Moon base, Ma Jiu and his band might show up at any moment.

At that time, they would have consumed large amounts of their strength, so their battle prowess could be even weaker than Ma Jiu and his men's.

Both options had a number of uncertainties. In contrast, catching up to and attacking Ma Jiu and his band would be the safer option.

However, they would have a chance at wiping out all their defenders and destroying their teleportation portal if they raided the Dark Moon's base directly. The spoils of their victory would be much greater.

After a moment of contemplation, Gu Yu gritted his teeth and said, "Handsome rewards come only with great risk! Let's head out

to the Dark Moon's base!"

He finally picked the path that was more dangerous, but would also be more fruitful if they succeeded.

After a brief period of adjustment and reorganization, Gu Yu led the group as they marched out towards the Dark Moon's base, instead of Ma Jiu and his band.

Two more days passed...

At sundown, Gu Yu waved his hand as he beckoned for everyone to stop and recuperate. "The Dark Moon's base is right in front of us. Let's take our last break to replenish our spiritual power; eat and drink to our fill. Then, we'll attack the Dark Moon's base under the cover of darkness.

Because of the imminent bloody battle, everyone remained silent, and the atmosphere was a bit sullen.

Not knowing what they would face, people were either recovering their strength, examining their spiritual tools, checking their stock of medicinal pills, or donning their spiritual armor to protect their vital parts.

Nie Tian, on the other hand, made up an excuse by telling Cai Yuan that he had a belly-ache, and walked away from the group.

Only after he was convinced that there was a significant distance

between him and everyone else did he take out a large piece of Golden Stone Rhino meat. Then, he used the Flame Spirit Incantation to start a fire, pierced the meat with a thin sword and cooked it on the fire.

After a short while, the Golden Stone Rhino's meat was cooked.

Looking at the meat which he knew contained numerous impurities, he hesitated for a brief moment, then started munching.

Even though the meat was cooked, it didn't taste good at all. It was bitter and hard to chew.

However, he ate it for its rich flesh power that only a fourth grade spirit beast would contain, and thus didn't have much of a standard for its taste.

After wolfing down several dozen kilos of meat, he sat there and waited in silence.

Time slowly passed...

Fifteen minutes later, wisps of flesh power gradually rose from within his stomach and rapidly increased in volume.

At the same time, he began to experience an intense pain in his abdomen, along with a burning sensation.

Soaked in sweat, he couldn't help but twist his face.

When he sent out his psychic power to examine himself, he could see his sweat carrying bits of gray, brown, green, and purple slime out of his pores.

The slime, which had a foul smell, seemed to be the impurities within the meat.

As more slime left Nie Tian's body, the excruciating pain in his abdomen was gradually relieved.

That was when he realized although he would experience discomfort, he was able to absorb energy from tainted spirit beast meat into his exceptional body.

As the pain grew more and more bearable, he could sense wisps of rich flesh power being dragged into his heart, where they were engulfed by the greedy green aura.

"It's time to go!" Gu Yu's voice rang out from afar.

Immediately after hearing Gu Yu's call, Nie Tian went to join the Blood Skull members, his body slowly returning to its normal state.



# Chapter 266: Midnight Raid

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Soon, night fell...

The moon hung high, and, along with numerous stars, it lit up the dark sky. Under the stars, Nie Tian followed the Blood Skull members to the vicinity of a secluded location where the Dark Moon's base was located.

Gu Yu came to a stop and issued his command to the rest of the group with a grave expression on his face, "You guys wait here."

Immediately afterwards, he gathered Pei Qiqi and two other Greater Heaven stage Blood Skull experts and headed out without making a sound.

Nie Tian didn't say anything. After they left, he formed seven Heaven Eyes by mixing his psychic power and seven strands of soul power from the fragmentary stars in his soul.

Like invisible lanterns, the Heaven Eyes followed Pei Qiqi and Gu Yu.

Eyes narrowed, Nie Tian commanded the Heaven Eyes with his soul, and used them to scan their surroundings.

"Dark night, starry sky..." For some unknown reason, Nie Tian suddenly had a feeling that compared to the daytime, his vision and sense of smell, as well as his psychic sensibility, were all

heightened during the nighttime.

After a brief pondering, he realized it probably had something to do with the fact that he practiced the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

Furthermore, it seemed that not only would his sensing ability improve when stars were shining in the heavens, but even his battle prowess would also rise.

The seven Heaven Eyes gradually approached the Dark Moon's base.

It was in a mountain valley.

Spatial rifts were slithering unceasingly in the air, while a few wooden and stone cottages were aligned under them.

Via his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian could see numerous Qi warriors dressed in Dark Moon uniforms entering and exiting some of the cottages.

There were also a few Dark Moon members scattered in the valley, cultivating, eating, or talking to one another.

Gu Yu and his Greater Heaven stage subordinates hid their life auras as they snuck up on and assassinated the few patrolling Dark Moon scouts.

Since most of them were at the early or middle Heaven stage, they couldn't even make a sound when they were snuck up on and killed.

After taking out all of the Dark Moon scouts, Gu Yu signaled Pei Qiqi.

Pei Qiqi then swiftly shifted her position around the perimeter of the mountain valley.

She constantly took out Space Spirit Jades from her ring of holding and laid them in certain crucial locations around the valley to form a large spell formation.

The close to a hundred Space Spirit Jades formed a spell formation without attracting any attention. Each Space Spirit Jade was engraved with detailed magical patterns.

Convinced that her spell formation layout had been finished, she returned to Gu Yu's side and silently dropped to the ground. As her slender hands began to rapidly interweave in the air in a dazzling fashion, one mysterious hand seal after another was formed.

Via the Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian paid close attention to Pei Qiqi and every subtle change around her.

Before long, he saw the Space Spirit Jades Pei Qiqi had placed in nearby locations begin to emanate faint light. Meanwhile,

fluctuations of spatial energy gradually spread out, forming a special magnetic field.

A short while later, many of the spatial rifts that had been swimming around in the vicinity changed the direction of their movements, as if they were being attracted by an unknown force.

One after another, they slowly gathered towards the mountain valley from every direction.

Whenever a spatial rift slithered to the location of a Space Spirit Jade, the jade would fly up into the spatial rift like it possessed its own spirit.

As soon as the Space Spirit Jade few into a moving spatial rift, the spatial rift would immediately become still in the midair, and then begin to emanate waves of spatial energy fluctuations.

The fluctuations spread out from the close to a hundred locations around the perimeter of the valley, which then connected with one another, creating a huge, invisible network over the entire mountain valley.

Beside Gu Yu, Pei Qiqi was still forming mysterious hand seals while her nose and jade-like forehead were already covered in transparent beads of sweat.

From the look of it, she had consumed a substantial amount of spiritual power to cast the spell.

“Alright!” Face filled with exhaustion, Pei Qiqi finally let out a sigh of relief and signaled Gu Yu that they could act.

“Fifteen minutes, you’ve got fifteen minutes. After that, no matter whether or not you’ve taken out all the Dark Moon defenders, you’ve got to retreat.” With these words, she slowly rose to her feet, her somewhat dim eyes fixed on a unimpressive wooden cottage in the mountain valley.

She was certain that the teleportation portal that the Dark Moon had deployed in the Void Illusion Mountain Range was in there.

She was well-aware that if they could wipe out all the Dark Moon defenders and destroy that teleportation portal within fifteen minutes, they would inflict great damage to the Dark Moon’s strength and influence.

Even for the Dark Moon, building another teleportation portal of the same scale would cost them substantial resources.

If the Blood Skull and the Wild Fire took advantage of the Dark Moon’s unfavorable situation to strike them during their reestablishment, their losses could worsen.

“Kill them all!!” The light of brutality shot out of Gu Yu’s eyes as he charged towards the Dark Moon’s base like a dragon being unleashed from an abyss.

Upon seeing him charge out, Shi Qing and the other two Greater Heaven stage Blood Skull experts also dashed down into the valley.

After hearing Gu Yu's roar, Cai Yuan, who had been waiting around the perimeter of the valley, let out a bellow, "Come on! Bring out your best, and kill as many Dark Moon cowards as you can! Don't waste any time!"

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Upon receiving his command, all the Blood Skull members shot out from behind him and poured towards the center of the valley with torrential killing auras.

The scattered Dark Moon members, who had been cultivating or communicating with each other in the valley, were alarmed and called out, hoping to overpower the intruders with their imposing manner, "Who's there?"

"Who is it?"

"This is the Dark Moon's territory. How dare you intrude?!"

As Gu Yu let out a wild laugh, numerous shiny, silver metal balls shot out from within his palm. "It's Lord Gu Yu from the Blood Skull!"

Each and every ball shone with an ice-cold metallic luster as they whizzed through the air and exploded when they reached the

center of a group of Dark Moon members.

In the next moment, countless silver needles that were as fine as hairs emanated frightening cold light as they shot into their surroundings.

In Nie Tian's eyes, the metal balls were like exploding hedgehogs, sending out all of their sharp needles.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

Not having the time to react, a dozen Dark Moon experts were immediately pierced by the silver needles and covered in bloody holes.

As their ear-piercing screams filled the mountain valley, more Dark Moon experts charged out of their cottages, roaring and brandishing their spiritual tools.

A few Dark Moon experts were both shocked and thrilled to see Gu Yu, and they hastily rushed towards the wooden cottage Pei Qiqi was focusing on.

“It's Gu Yu from the Blood Skull!”

“The Blood Skull has invaded! Get word to the Land of the Abandoned and have the headquarters send powerful experts here!”

“Gu Yu must be insane to dare to come here! He should not imagine that he can get out of here alive!”

Just like Ma Jiu was to them, Gu Yu was the Blood Skull’s highest commander of their forces in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Him being here meant that the Blood Skull had planned to go all-out with this battle.

However, they also understood that if they could use their teleportation portal to inform their headquarters of the Blood Skull’s operation, every Blood Skull member, including Gu Yu himself, would be killed and buried here in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

A wild laugh filled Gu Yu’s face as he blurted, “Hahaha! Go ahead and see if you can summon more of your scumbags from the Land of the Abandoned!”

With those words, he took the initiative and charged into the Dark Moon’s base like a bolt of lightning, chasing down and killing their members.

A shade of blood seemed to have filled Shi Qing’s pupils as he led the other Greater Heaven stage experts in a charge after Gu Yu, the Blood Skull patterns on their chests unleashing the light of bloodthirst.

In the center of the valley, dozens of early and middle Heaven stage Dark Moon members were shrieking as they attempted to



contain Gu Yu and his men.

It was at that very moment that Cai Yuan charged into the valley and engaged in a fierce battle with them, along with several dozen Blood Skull members.

Nie Tian followed them to the battlefield, but he didn't rush into battle. Instead, he used his Heaven Eyes to observe the situation.

WHOOSH!

The blue figure of a pretty woman flashed past right in front of Nie Tian's eyes. She threaded her way through the fighting Dark Moon and Blood Skull members, and dashed towards one of the wooden cottages.

"Pei Qiqi!" Without even thinking, Nie Tian immediately realized it was Pei Qiqi.

He had long since noticed that Pei Qiqi had been focusing all her attention on that specific cottage since she had finished her spell.

From the look in her eyes, Nie Tian speculated that the Dark Moon's teleportation portal was in there.

Inside the cottage, the Dark Moon expert, who had just claimed that Gu Yu and all his men would die in their base, roared angrily as his heart burned with anxiety, "Our teleportation portal isn't working!"

“Damn! Now that we can’t get in touch with our headquarters, we can’t have them send reinforcements from the Land of the Abandoned!

“It must be that cunt Pei Qiqi who did this!”

As soon as they attempted to start the teleportation portal, they noticed that the entire valley had been covered by an unstable magnetic field.

Unstable spatial energy had forcibly disrupted the spatial fluctuations in the area, and thus stopped their teleportation portal from activating.

“Why hasn’t Lord Ma Jiu returned? God dammit! Shouldn’t he have killed that bitch already!?”

“Without Lord Ma Jiu here, we can’t possibly beat Gu Yu and his men with just the few of us!”

“Worst of all, now we can’t even inform our headquarters to send reinforcements!”

Unable to come up with a solution, the few Dark Moon experts became soaked in sweat due to anxiety.

Shi Qing saw through Pei Qiqi’s intentions and thus joined her

after seeing her charge towards the wooden cottage. “Let me help you, Miss Pei!”

Moments later, Shi Qing arrived at the cottage before Pei Qiqi. He stamped his foot with great force, and then a wave of vigorous energy fluctuations spread out from under his feet.

It was as if there was a giant monster struggling under the earth, roaring and storming towards the wooden cottage.

Struck by the wave of energy fluctuations, the cottage instantly collapsed, and every Dark Moon member inside was exposed.

The teleportation portal, which could hold five people at one time, remained unscathed and stood unwavering like a large magnet sticking to the earth.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Pei Qiqi’s Ethereal Swords flew out from her ring of holding, but rapidly vanished from everyone’s sight, without leaving any trace.

“Ethereal Swords! The woman is using her Ethereal Swords!” Fear could be seen on the Dark Moon members’ faces as they fled in opposite directions.

PUFF! PUFF!

Two Ethereal Swords appeared out of nowhere and pierced through two Heaven stage Dark Moon experts.

## Chapter 267: A One-sided Battle

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Nie Tian could see that they were rather lucky with their operation against the Dark Moon this time.

Since there weren't many powerful experts on the Dark Moon's side, their battle prowess was very limited.

After a thorough observation, he found that there were only two early and one middle Greater Heaven stage expert among the Dark Moon defenders. All the rest were Heaven stage Qi warriors.

Gu Yu alone would be able to take the three Greater Heaven stage Dark Moon experts single-handedly, and it would be a guaranteed victory.

Even the slightest gap in cultivation base between the two sides would usually determine the result of a battle. Normally speaking, one late Greater Heaven stage cultivator could easily slaughter three middle Greater Heaven stage enemies.

The Dark Moon found themselves at their wits' end dealing with Gu Yu alone, not to mention having to defend against the middle Greater Heaven stage Shi Qing and two other Greater Heaven stage experts at the same time.

Given enough time, with only the four Greater Heaven stage experts, the Blood Skull would be able to wipe out the entire Dark Moon force that had been defending their base.

The reason why there was such a huge gap between the strength of the two sides was that Ma Jiu had led an assault against Pei Qiqi and still hadn't returned.

If Ma Jiu and his band had returned to the valley and united with the defenders at their base, Gu Yu and his Blood Skull members would probably have suffered a great loss.

The Blood Skull members laughed in wild and arrogant manners as they chased after the Dark Moon members at different locations in the valley.

“Hahaha! We've hit gold!”

“Without powerful experts here to help them defend their base, not only can we kill all of these weaklings, but we can even destroy their teleportation portal!”

“Great prizes come with with great risks indeed!”

Every one of them saw this as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to deal a great blow to the Dark Moon.

If they could later ambush and kill Ma Jiu here, they would practically annihilate the entire branch the Dark Moon had deployed in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

If that happened, their operation would become a huge success, and every member who had participated in it would be considered to have made substantial contributions.

Upon returning, they would be able to receive handsome contribution points, which they could use to trade for large amounts of spirit stones, medicinal pills, and high-grade spiritual armors and weapons.

At the exploded wooden cottage...

With a momentum that was as fierce as a tiger, Shi Qing forced the Dark Moon members to run away from their teleportation portal.

Pei Qiqi, on the other hand, was focused on breaking up the teleportation portal with her deep knowledge regarding spatial magics, after killing two Dark Moon members with her Ethereal Swords.

Nie Tian observed Pei Qiqi from about a hundred meters away.

He was no longer interested in the battle taking place in the center of the valley.

He had already realized that the most crucial factor that would determine the outcome of the battle didn't lie with Gu Yu or any other Blood Skull expert.

Rather, it was whether Pei Qiqi could destroy or dismantle the teleportation portal, and therefore prevent Dark Moon reinforcements from pouring into the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“Miss Pei, although I’m not helpful at all when it comes to dismantling the teleportation portal, I can guarantee you that no Dark Moon member will ever come close enough to distract you.” Shi Qing solemnly gave his word.

A wave of earthy-yellow energy fluctuations spread out into his surroundings, and the ground within a few dozen meters range couldn’t stop trembling, giving rise to unceasing rumbling sounds.

The Dark Moon members who were standing in his vicinity couldn’t stop themselves from shaking as they sustained constant blows from the ground.

All the early and middle Heaven stage Dark Moon members around him had blood dripping from their mouths and noses as they fled in fear.

Only a handful of late Heaven stage members were able to contend with the force for a brief while. However, all of their faces began to turn pale shortly afterwards, and they were forced on withdrawing from the area.

In contrast, Pei Qiqi didn’t seem to be influenced at all. She was crouching in front of the the teleportation portal and occasionally checking it with her hands, devoted to finding a way to dismantle



it.

The few Greater Heaven stage Dark Moon experts also came to understand the truly key factor that would determine the result of the battle, and then madly dashed towards Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing. “The teleportation portal is the key!”

“That bitch is going to dismantle our teleportation portal. If she succeeds, we won’t be able to return to the Land of the Abandoned, and the Blood Skull will hunt us down wherever we go!”

“We have to stop her!”

However, Gu Yu had long since prepared for that.

“It seems that I have to let you go first. But don’t worry. It won’t be long before I send Ma Jiu and the others there to keep you company.” Gu Yu’s wild laughs were so thunderous that the whole mountain valley shook and rumbled.

At the same time, the other two Greater Heaven stage Blood Skull members rapidly converged on Shi Qing and waited for their enemies’ arrival.

“Our victory is almost certain.” After observing for quite a while, Nie Tian had already come to the conclusion that, if there were no mishaps, the Blood Skull would be victorious.

Therefore, he didn’t intend to join the battle and win credits

alongside the other Blood Skull members.

He knew that, with every Dark Moon member they killed, they could trade their victims' heads or bracelets of holding for certain amounts of contribution points.

The amount of contribution points they earned would determine the valuables they would receive from the Blood Skull, as well as the speed at which they would be promoted.

Nie Tian knew that if, as a guest elder, he jumped in at this moment and reaped spoils when the battle was a certain victory, the other Blood Skull members would very likely hate him for stealing their credits.

Therefore, he stood there and did nothing.

PUFF!

Blood shot out of an early Greater Heaven stage Dark Moon member's ripped-open neck. The man's head flew high into the air before Gu Yu caught it with one hand.

With a wild, bloodthirsty laugh, Gu Yu shook it, causing more blood to fall onto him.

The man's death seemed to have severed as the last straw, breaking the last remaining confidence of the Dark Moon members who were still struggling to turn the situation around.

Soon, all the Dark Moon experts that were fighting Blood Skull members lost their fighting spirit and decided to abandon their base.

“We’ve got to leave now. It’s a lost cause. If we insist on staying and fighting, we’ll only end up dying for nothing.”

“Let’s go and find Lord Ma Jiu!

“Only by joining forces with Lord Ma Jiu will we be strong enough to turn the situation around!”

“Let’s get out of here!”

All the figures who were wearing Dark Moon garments spread out and rushed out of the valley.

Covered in blood, Gu Yu chased after the two remaining Greater Heaven stage Dark Moon experts, while Cai Yuan the rest of the other Blood Skull members pursued the fleeing Heaven stage Dark Moon members.

Dressed like a male cultivator, Cai Yue also charged out of the valley along with other Blood Skull members, shouting excitedly.

Upon seeing her, Shi Qing’s expression immediately flickered as he called out to her, “Little Lord!

“You can’t leave the valley! Before we came here, we made a pact that you wouldn’t leave my sight! If you break the pact, I’ll inform your father of it after we return to Shatter City. I’m afraid he’ll ban you from coming to the Void Illusion Mountain Range ever again.”

After hearing Shi Qing’s claim, Cai Yue sulked as she came back and repeatedly stabbed a dead Dark Moon expert in the chest with her sword. “Good god! You’re so boring!”

Seething with excitement, she was just about to pursue and kill Dark Moon members alongside her brother, which was exactly the type of life she had longed for and the very purpose of her trip to the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Shi Qing’s sudden appearance had locked her down like a set of shackles and stopped her from pursuing what her heart desired. It was only natural that she wasn’t happy about it.

However, she knew very well that if she went ahead and left the valley anyways, her father would definitely ban her from stepping out of Shatter City again.

Therefore, she could only wait in the silenced mountain valley while battles were taking place elsewhere.

Upon looking around, she caught sight of Nie Tian, who was standing in the valley, doing nothing. She wrinkled her nose and said, with her delicate small face filled with contempt, “Humph!

What kind of man are you if you're too cowardly to fight the Dark Moon with us? People like you disgust me the most!

"I've long since noticed that you did nothing but watch the whole time.

"A guy like you doesn't deserve to be a guest elder of the Blood Skull!

"The Blood Skull doesn't need an incompetent guest elder. You'd better give back the identity medallion as soon as possible so that you don't sully the reputation of our guest elders!"

Shi Qing, who had been guarding Pei Qiqi and waiting for her to destroy the teleportation portal, also shot an examining gaze towards Nie Tian.

That was when he realized that Nie Tian hadn't participated in the raid.

He understood that Cai Yuan would never give a guest elder's identity medallion to an incompetent man.

Only truly powerful experts who had won Cai Yuan's admiration would be given a guest elder's identity medallion. The early Heaven stage Nie Tian seemed to be the weakest.

As a matter of fact, Shi Qing had been curious about Nie Tian's battle prowess, and had wanted to examine him with this raid.

However, Nie Tian hadn't made a single move. Thus, he was both disappointed and harboring suspicion.

That was why he didn't berate Cai Yue for being rude.

# Chapter 268: Another Turn of Events

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Battles and conflicts broke out year-round in every realm of the Domain of the Falling Stars.

In the other nine realms, since there were Qi warrior sects, some young and weak cultivators were respected by others because of their parents' or grandparents' lofty status in the sect.

This wasn't the case in the Realm of Split Void.

Outlaws and bandits from the other nine realms came together and formed forces in the Realm of Split Void, which made it an even more inhospitable environment for cultivators.

In here, bloody battles took place all the time. People only worshipped the strong and fierce.

Even Cai Yuan, the son of the Blood Skull's head, had to win recognition and respect from the Blood Skull elders through countless battles and years of tempering in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, let alone common members of the Blood Skull.

In Cai Yue's eyes, now that her brother had given Nie Tian a guest elder's identity medallion, he should possess strength and power that matched such status.

She took it for granted that Nie Tian, who had just obtained their guest elder's identity, would have put forth a good performance in

this operation by killing as many Dark Moon members as possible to prove himself to all the Blood Skull members, including her brother.

If Nie Tian failed to prove his strength to everyone, they would question her brother's judgment.

However, Nie Tian had been nothing but a onlooker. She wasn't sure if he was afraid of fighting Dark Moon enemies or if he had other intentions.

Nevertheless, from her point of view, Nie Tian's negative actions jeopardized her brother's prestige and authority. Therefore, she didn't even try to mask her discontent with him.

Nie Tian smiled and turned a blind eye on her accusations.

He also noticed the way Shi Qing was looking at him, knowing that Shi Qing also questioned his competence.

Cai Yue let out a cold snort and said with an imposing manner, "What? Is that admitting that you were afraid? If you're afraid, just turn in the guest elder's identity medallion. Don't you taint our reputation, let people look down on the Blood Skull, and assume that we take in whoever wishes to join us!"

At that moment, Pei Qiqi, who had been engrossed in using spatial magics to analyze the formation of the teleportation portal, said with a cold tone without even turning her head, "Senior Shi, I



need to concentrate to crack the spell formation of this teleportation portal. Would you please tell her to keep quiet?”

Cai Yue immediately grew angry after hearing Pei Qiqi’s words. “It’s you who needs to keep quiet!”

She held her hands akimbo as she turned around to target Pei Qiqi like an small, yet aggressive, gamecock.

Actually, the fact that she was angry with Nie Tian had a great deal to do with Pei Qiqi.

She knew that Nie Tian was with Pei Qiqi and Li Ye.

Cai Yuan had repeatedly put himself in danger for Pei Qiqi, so Cai Yue had long since made Pei Qiqi her number one enemy. Accordingly, she wouldn’t be kind to whoever was related to Pei Qiqi.

Just as she was about to lash out, Shi Qing cleared his throat and said, “Alright, alright, you can settle your issues later. Miss Pei needs to focus on the portal now. If Miss Pei can’t crack the teleportation portal, we’ll probably have to deal with a flood of Dark Moon experts. Let’s look at the bigger picture, shall we?”

Actually, Shi Qing was also somewhat confused.

He was fairly familiar with Pei Qiqi, Li Ye, and their master.

He was aware that the three of them were highly regarded in Shatter City. Even the head of the Blood Skull treated them with respect.

Both Pei Qiqi and Li Ye had numerous Qi warriors working for them, but it seemed that they never attached even the slightest importance to any of them.

He had already realized that Nie Tian was unusually close to Li Ye, for not only had Li Ye taken Nie Tian to the Blood Skull's headquarters, but he had asked for favors to arrange a cultivation room for Nie Tian.

Pei Qiqi had been known for her unparalleled arrogance and loftiness. She normally wouldn't attach much importance to anyone.

Obviously, part of the reason that Pei Qiqi told Cai Yue to keep quiet was to stick up for Nie Tian. This was very uncommon, and went against Pei Qiqi's personality.

"Who exactly is this Hua Tian person?" Shi Qing couldn't help but wonder, eyes glittering.

After being berated by Shi Qi, Cai Yue pierced even more holes into the dead body, making it a bloody mess, to vent her discontent.

Even though she still mumbled something as she wielded her sword, her voice grew fainter and fainter.

After all, she also understood what it would mean for the Blood Skull if Pei Qiqi could successfully crack and dismantle the Dark Moon's teleportation portal.

Without it, the Dark Moon's base would lose its meaning, and thus they wouldn't be able to lead expeditions in the Void Illusion Mountain Range in the near future.

All the Dark Moon experts who were still wandering in the mountain range would fall prey to the Blood Skull and Wild Fire, and the Dark Moon would be dealt a significant blow because of it.

Therefore, even though she held serious grudges against Pei Qiqi, she knew that she'd better put them aside for the time being.

With her quieting down, Nie Tian was relieved as he once again watched Pei Qiqi work on the teleportation portal.

There wasn't any sign of Gu Yu, Cai Yuan, or the other Blood Skull members returning, since it was clear to them that the fleeing Dark Moon members were hoping to join forces with Ma Jiu and his band.

If they did, it would be much more difficult to destroy them.

Hence, they exerted all their power to chase down and kill them

before they could.

A short while passed...

Strong spatial fluctuations rippled out from Pei Qiqi. Eyes shining with a sharp light, she suddenly pressed her jade-like hand against a corner of the portal.

CRUNCH!

The originally tightly incorporated spell formation cracked open, and a component fell off of it.

Without any hesitation, Pei Qiqi rapidly put that component away.

Afterwards, her hands continuously moved about as she dismantled the teleportation portal and stored all the components in her ring of holding.

The teleportation portal, which the Dark Moon had spent an enormous amount of resources and effort to build, vanished after a short while.

“Alright!” Pei Qiqi seemed rather exhausted as she sat down on the ground. Right before she began to recover her strength with medicinal pills and spirit stones, she turned to Shi Qing and said, “You can inform Senior Gu that they can take their time chasing after the Dark Moon members, as no reinforcements from the

Land of the Abandoned are coming any time soon.”

Shi Qing’s spirits were greatly lifted. “Nice work! Thank you, Miss Pei!”

Pei Qiqi’s success had put an end to their worries of being attacked from behind. Not only did they not need to withdraw from here, but they could even go on and hunt down Ma Jiu and his band.

“No need to thank me.” Pei Qiqi’s tone was quite frigid. She slowly closed her eyes and said, “Oh, right, since I cracked this teleportation portal, it should belong to me, right?”

“Of course, it’s only fair.” Although Shi Qing also desired it, he could only nod along.

After all, he knew how valuable a teleportation portal was.

Even all the valuables looted from the Dark Moon Qi warriors in the valley added together wouldn’t match the value of that teleportation portal.

In order for forces like the Blood Skull to persist in the Realm of Split Void, those teleportation portals were what they needed and simultaneously lacked the most.

If they could bring it back to Shatter City and give it to Cai Lan, Cai Lan would undoubtedly be ecstatic, and reward them with

numerous cultivation materials that agreed with them.

Both Gu Yu's and his status would rise significantly due to their great contribution.

However, he was aware that Pei Qiqi had played the most crucial part in this operation. If it weren't for her, the Blood Skull wouldn't have made up their minds to launch the raid.

If she hadn't cracked and dismantled the teleportation portal, they would have faced great potential danger for being in the mountain valley.

Even though she hadn't fought per se, her contribution determined the course of the battle, so she deserved to keep the teleportation portal.

Even Cai Yue, who detested her very much, didn't say anything to protest this matter.

Immediately afterwards, Shi Qing used his Sound Stone to inform Gu Yu and Cai Yuan of the situation, and told them that they could go all-out to chase after the deserters, and didn't need to worry about powerful Dark Moon experts descending upon them.

Deep into the night...

Pei Qiqi was recuperating, and Shi Qing was sitting next to Cai Yue, adjusting his breathing with his eyes closed.

At that moment, none of the Blood Skull had returned since they hadn't finished hunting down their enemies.

Without anything better to do, Nie Tian was also sitting on the ground, refining his spiritual sea.

Before the operation, every last wisp of flesh power generated from the Golden Stone Rhino's meat had been torn to shreds and devoured by the domineering green aura residing in his heart.

However, considering that Shi Qing and Cai Yue were around, he reckoned it was better if he stayed on the safe side and didn't eat the Golden Stone Rhino's meat.

Even still, as he refined his spiritual sea, he spared some of his attention to keep an eye on the green aura.

The green aura was slithering in his heart restlessly, as if it was longing very eagerly for more flesh essence.

"Abyssal indeed..." Nie Tian couldn't help but marvel at it.

He couldn't be sure how much flesh power he had accumulated throughout the years before he had finally awakened his bloodline talent, Life Transfer.

The fact that the green aura had been acting so strangely made

him wonder if perhaps there was a possibility that it could upgrade again soon.

However, its demand for flesh power was so great that he had a headache over the situation.

It was as if the small green aura was a dried-up riverbank; it would require an immeasurably large amount of flesh power to fill it to the brim.

Only when it was full and satisfied would it settle down, lie dormant, and get ready for its next spectacular change.

At the first light of dawn...

Keh! Keh!

Soft coughs suddenly echoed out from afar.

Soon, a pale, sickly, skinny Qi warrior appeared in the mountain valley.

At first, Shi Qing assumed that it was a member of the Blood Skull who had gotten separated and thus returned.

However, when the Qi warrior stepped closer and stared at him with a strange smile on his ghastly face, a shiver ran through Shi Qing as his face instantly dropped.



Pei Qiqi, who was still recovering her strength with spirit stones, also sprang to her feet, as if they were facing a great enemy.

Nie Tian and Cai Yue didn't know what was happening, and thus shot confused glances towards the man.

Shi Qing took a deep breath and said loudly to the man, with an extremely grim expression, "Li Langfeng! I didn't expect that you'd show up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range!"

"Yeah, I've explored it for a few days, and I was on my way back to the Land of the Abandoned." After uttering a few words, Li Langfeng coughed violently twice, his face filled with a gruesome, diseased-beyond-cure paleness. "I can't believe you managed to take the Dark Moon's base and tear down their teleportation portal. I have to say, I'm impressed."

With those words, he shook his head and said with a helpless expression, "After all, I'm a guest elder of the Dark Moon, and take shelter in the Land of the Abandoned. Plus, I traveled here via their teleportation portal. Now that you've stolen it, how am I supposed to return to the Land of the Abandoned?"

Shi Qing's face was as sullen as lake water as he said, "What do you want?"

Li Langfeng didn't respond immediately. Rather, he took his time to glance over the few people in the valley, then said with a sigh, "I'm not an official member of the Dark Moon, so I'm not obligated

to kill Pei Qiqi and offend her master just for them. I can't kill Cai Lan's only daughter either. If I did, he'd definitely go mad, and I'm afraid I won't be able to make a living in the Realm of Split Void.

“But on the other hand, as a guest elder of the Dark Moon, I have to do something.

“Shi Qing, if I kill you, I can show the Dark Moon that I've honored my identity, and at the same time, I don't need to worry that Cai Lan will exert all measures to come after me. So, this has to be done, sorry.”

While Shi Qing had a grim look in his eyes, Li Langfeng turned to take a look at Nie Tian and asked, “Who are you?”

Before Nie Tian could respond, he went on and said, “At the Heaven stage and not wearing Blood Skull garments. It seems that it doesn't matter who you are. Well, it's your bad luck that you're here. I'll just take you as a tagalong. I'll turn in your head along with Shi Qing's and get whatever I can from the Dark Moon.”

“He's one of ours!” Pei Qiqi said coldly.

Li Langfeng's face remained still as he said, “Your master only has two disciples, you and Li Ye. As long as I don't kill you, your master won't make a big fuss about it. I don't believe your master will hunt me down for this kid.”

“Oh, right, hand over the teleportation portal you’ve taken from the Dark Moon, and then you can leave.”

## Chapter 269: Sicko

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As soon as Li Langfeng had appeared, Nie Tian had formed a Heaven Eye and used it to determine his cultivation base. “He’s at the late Greater Heaven stage!”

Normally speaking, as long as his target’s cultivation base was lower than the Worldly realm, he would be able to get a good idea of the target’s cultivation base with a Heaven Eye, which contained a wisp of his soul power.

Li Langfeng was no exception.

Since Gu Yu had led the other Blood Skull members out of the mountain valley to chase after their enemies, the middle Greater Heaven stage Shi Qing was the most powerful expert among those who had stayed behind.

Pei Qiqi was only in the late Heaven stage, and Cai Yue hadn’t even entered the Heaven stage.

Their strength was clearly not enough if they were going to fight Li Langfeng with just the few of them.

Perhaps this was why Li Langfeng had appeared as if he had nothing to fear.

“What if I don’t leave?” Pei Qiqi asked coldly.

“It won’t change the result.” Li Langfeng seemed very calm and poised. “I’ll take the teleportation portal from you and the kid will die. You’ll end up wasting your strength for nothing.”

“Pei Qiqi, you probably know that the reason why the Dark Moon picked this location to set up their teleportation portal was that there was seldom any spatial rift activity in this valley.

“In light of this, you won’t be able to display your advantage as you would in other areas of the mountain range. Also, you must have spent a lot of energy to crack that teleportation portal. I think it’s safe to say that you haven’t fully recovered yet.”

Li Langfeng took his time to turn to Shi Qing and say, “I ran into and killed a couple of Blood Skull members early on. Through them, I learned that Gu Yu wasn’t coming back anytime soon. Without him here to help you, I seriously doubt that you can get around me and escape.”

“You killed our people?!” Cai Yue said angrily. “Do you imagine that my father will let you off?”

Li Langfeng put on a fake smile and said, “I’m a guest elder of the Dark Moon. What do you expect? As long as I don’t kill you, your father won’t make a big deal of it. Do you take it your father doesn’t have better things to do than launching large-scale operations against me just because of a couple of his foot soldiers?”

Shi Qing took some time pondering and said, “Brother Li, you’re only the Dark Moon’s guest elder. You don’t have to do this.

Considering your strength, you don't need to use a teleportation portal to return to the Land of the Abandoned. Plus, why not come to Shatter City with us? We're in need of powerful allies like you."

To everyone's surprise, Shi Qing showed weakness.

"Uncle Shi! How can you say that!?" Cai Yue shouted indignantly, assuming Shi Qing had sullied the Blood Skull's fierce reputation.

What she didn't know was that Shi Qing was actually doing all this to save her.

Both he and Pei Qiqi had heard stories of this man, and knew that even though he said he wouldn't want to enrage Pei Qiqi's master or Cai Lan by killing them, and that if he did it, his life in the Realm of Split Void would become very difficult, the man was actually a hothead.

He was capable of doing anything when he was provoked.

The reason why he had come to the Realm of Split Void was that he had messed with the wrong person, a person who was even more influential than Cai Lan and Pei Qiqi's master.

"I'm sorry. Now that I've taken the Dark Moon's identity medallion, I'm bound by moral principles to honor my identity." Li Langfeng once again began to cough intensely. He shook his head as he took a small bell from his ring of holding, and then

turned to Pei Qiqi and said, “I’ll ask you one last time. Do you wish to leave?”

“No,” said Pei Qiqi.

Face still pale and indifferent, Li Langfeng nodded and turned to Cai Yue. “What about you?”

“I’m not leaving either!” Cai Yue yelled.

Shi Qing realized things had gone beyond negotiation when he saw Li Langfeng take out his bell. His face immediately changed as he yelled at Cai Yue for the first time, “NO! You have to go!

“Little Lord! You must keep a clear head. We need you to leave so that you can inform Gu Yu of what’s happening here with a Sound Stone!

“I’m sure he’ll rush back as soon as he receives the message, possibly in time to save us!

“We need you to save us! But you have to leave now!”

Shi Qing begged for her to listen.

Even though Li Langfeng had long since seen through Shi Qing’s intentions, and knew that Shi Qing was only saying those things to make Cai Yue leave, he let Shi Qing finish his words and acted as if

he hadn't heard him.

After all, he didn't intend to make Cai Lan his sworn enemy.

"I need to save them..." Cai Yue hesitated for a brief moment before she braced herself and said to Shi Qing with great determination, "Hang on, Uncle Shi! I'm going right now, and I'll come back with Uncle Gu and my brother in no time!"

"Go! We'll only survive if you can find them quickly!" Shi Qing urged.

"Alright!" Then, Cai Yue shot a fierce glance at Li Langfeng and said, "I'll be back, sicko! Next time you see me, it will be the end of you!"

With these words, she sped away to get reinforcements to save Shi Qing.

"Thank you, Miss Pei." Shi Qing said with a smile. "Now that Little Yue has left, you can take Hua Tian and leave. Don't mind me."

He had always referred to Cai Yue as Little Lord. Never had he used Little Yue.

However, now that Cai Yue had disappeared from their sight, and knowing that the odds were against him, he revealed his true sentiments and referred to her as Little Yue.



He had been taking care of Cai Yue over the years. Even though he had never revealed her feelings to her, he had doted on her and taken her as his own.

He was well-aware that part of the reason why Pei Qiqi had insisted on staying was that she would like to make sure Cai Yue was safe.

Obviously, Pei Qiqi didn't do it for Cai Yue's sake, but rather, it was out of her guilt towards Cai Yuan.

"You take care. I hope we can still meet some day." Pei Qiqi nodded gently before turning her body and shifting to Nie Tian's side with a swift move. Then, she grabbed Nie Tian by the arm and dragged him away, dashing in the direction Cai Yue had disappeared in, where she could see a few spatial rifts slithering in the air.

"I hope we can." Face sad and dreary, Shi Qing said with a voice so soft that it was as if he was talking to himself.

It was clear to him that even though Ma Jiu and Gu Yu were also in the late Greater Heaven stage, neither of them would be able to defeat this man.

If the man truly intended to kill him, he wouldn't stand a chance.

Therefore, knowing that certain death awaited, he didn't even

blink while watching Pei Qiqi take Nie Tian dashing out of the valley at full speed.

Nie Tian couldn't help but turn his head back to look at Shi Qing as he staggered along after Pei Qiqi.

He had never expected that Pei Qiqi, who had always insisted on staying and fighting, would take him and flee the moment Cai Yue left, as if she had only stayed to see Cai Yue leave safely.

Ever since Cai Yue had seen Pei Qiqi, she had found numerous ways to taunt her and give her a hard time.

Nie Tian had thought that Pei Qiqi would loathe her and be glad to watch her die.

Her decision to stay and fight had greatly surprised him.

However, he never expected that she would decide to leave as soon as Cai Yue left, completely unconcerned about Shi Qing's fate.

BLUB! BLUB! BLUB!

Just as Pei Qiqi and Nie Tian were about to run out of the valley, a dark-green wall of water that reeked of a foul smell suddenly appeared in front of them.

As Pei Qiqi approached it and the light shield around her made

contact with it, her spiritual power shield was immediately dissolved.

Pei Qiqi, who was about to crash into the dark-green wall of water, instantly stopped her dashing momentum, her expression flickering.

Li Langfeng didn't move a bit. He said casually, with his back facing Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi, "I said you can only leave after handing over the teleportation portal and the kid."

He had obtained a thorough grasp of the situation from the few Blood Skull members he had killed.

Therefore, he had long since made arrangements for this.

Cai Yue could leave only because he let her.

Pei Qiqi and Nie Tian had decided to leave without his consent. Thus, they triggered the spell formation he had deployed.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

Without uttering a word, Pei Qiqi unleashed spatial magics against the dark-green wall of water.

Separated from her by the wall of water were a few spatial rifts, which answered her summoning and slowly moved towards her.

“You’re such a ingrate for not appreciating my kindness.”

Li Langfeng shook his head. An unpleasant expression appeared on his face as he shook the bell in his hand.

CHING!

The crisp sound of a bell rang out.

Pei Qiqi, who was manipulating spatial rifts using spatial magics, suddenly let out a muffled groan as an unnatural redness appeared on her face, as if she had taken a heavy blow.

RUUUUMBLE!

A violent turbulence that could shake Heaven and Earth was created in Nie Tian’s soul as soon as he heard the bell ring.

He shuddered fiercely as he experienced an excruciating pain in his head, like someone had hit his head with a giant hammer.

“It’s a psychic attack!”

# Chapter 270: Mad Bombardment

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Violent turbulence and waves were created in Nie Tian's soul.

A cultivator's soul is like a sea of countless wisps of psychic awareness, which is usually peaceful and quiet.

However, when the crisp sound of Li Langfeng's bell rang out, all the psychic awareness in Nie Tian's soul sea seemed to be disrupted and torn by an invisible hand, causing splitting pain in his head.

The unbearable pain was more than enough to make those who didn't have an unwavering will break down.

Even though Nie Tian managed to pull through, gritting his teeth, it pained him to the point where he almost wanted to die.

Shortly afterward, the seven fragmentary stars floating above his sea of psychic awareness began to shine with bright light.

Dazzling, bright starlight poured down onto Nie Tian's sea of awareness, calming his mind.

Soothed by the starlight, his originally-turbulent sea of psychic awareness gradually returned to calm.

The stabbing pain in his head also gradually grew bearable. Nie

Tian took a deep breath and turned around to stare at Li Langfeng with a cold look in his eyes.

Li Langfeng's reckless actions enraged Nie Tian so much that he no longer wanted to leave, even if he could.

Anger could also be seen in Pei Qiqi's eyes as she let out a muffled groan, intoxicating redness appearing on her unearthly beautiful face.

She immediately turned around and pointed the Ethereal Swords floating in front of her at Li Langfeng.

Li Langfeng had his back facing the two of them the entire time, as if he didn't think it was necessary to pay attention to them, who couldn't possibly pose any threat to him.

His true target had always been Shi Qing, who was at the middle Greater Heaven stage.

Just like Pei Qiqi and Nie Tian, the waves of energy from the bell also dealt a strong blow to Shi Qing. He even had blood dripping out of the corner of his mouth.

"Hmm?" Li Langfeng finally turned around and began to look Nie Tian up and down with an examining gaze.

"He's still alive?" Li Langfeng stroked his chin with his non-bell-bearing hand as he measured up Nie Tian.

“This is strange,” he thought to himself. He had just formed and launched three strands of psychic power, inflicting the strongest one on Shi Qing. As the result, Shi Qing had immediately puked blood.

He had used the other two strands of psychic power to attack Pei Qiqi and Nie Tian. The one he had inflicted on Pei Qiqi was weaker than the one he had used to attack Nie Tian.

After all, he didn’t want Pei Qiqi’s master to make him her sworn enemy. He just wanted to make her give up by letting her know that she didn’t have a chance fighting against him.

On the other hand, he had exerted more power to attack Nie Tian because he wanted to kill him with one quick strike.

Once Nie Tian was dead, Pei Qiqi would have one less reason to resist him. It would be very likely that she would choose to hand over the Dark Moon’s teleportation portal and leave.

He had long since seen through Nie Tian’s cultivation base. Thus, he was certain that the damage he had inflicted on this early Heaven stage young man would be fatal.

Seeing that Nie Tian was still standing and seemed unscathed, he was rather surprised, and began to secretly attach importance to him.

“It seems this kid is one of those people who possess superior psychic power. This is the only rational explanation for why he was able to bear my attack and remain standing.” Li Langfeng soon had an idea. “Those who are blessed with supreme psychic power usually focus on cultivating psychic power, and thus neglect other aspects.”

With these thoughts, he decided to adopt a different method.

PHEW! PHEW!

Wisps of dark-green smoke suddenly began to rise from the earth.

It seemed as if they were vaporized energy rising from the depths of the earth.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

As soon as the wisps of dark-green smoke made contact with the spiritual energy shields surrounding Pei Qiqi, Shi Qing, and Nie Tian, their shields began to show signs of dissolving.

Anxiety could be seen on Shi Qing and Pei Qiqi's faces as they hastily summoned and infused their light shields with more spiritual power to contend with the toxic, dark-green smoke.

Both Shi Qing and Pei Qiqi knew that Li Langfeng had come from the Realm of Dark Underworld and had been closely connected



with the Spirit God sect.

The Spirit God sect was located in a place where poisonous miasma filled the air. Therefore, many of their sect members were experts in wielding poisons.

It was said that the fact that Li Langfeng coughed all day long and always seemed sickly had a great deal to do with the grotesque poisonous techniques he practiced.

One time, he had allowed various types of toxins into his body, but something had gone wrong. He had almost died in that accident.

Somehow, he had survived, but he couldn't fully refine and rid himself of the poisonous residuals. Therefore, he constantly suffered erosion from them.

Rumor had it that Li Langfeng would be killed by the toxins sooner or later.

Supposedly, he had chosen to live in the Land of the Abandoned and spent most of his time in the Void Illusion Mountain Range because he had been seeking a resolution to his problem.

As a man who practiced poisonous techniques and suffered a backlash from them, the might of the dark-green smoke he unleashed was by no means insignificant.

Nie Tian had been using the green jade bracelet Li Ye had gifted him to keep away the tainted spiritual Qi in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

However, since the energy released by the bracelet didn't match Nie Tian's cultivation attributes, he couldn't further power it with the different sorts of energy inside of him to fend off the toxic smoke.

Therefore, when the dark-green smoke gradually filled the entire mountain valley, the light shield surrounding him was the first to break down.

"Come here to me," Pei Qiqi called out to him.

Nie Tian shook his head as he stepped back instead of approaching Pei Qiqi. "There's no need."

He intentionally kept a sizable distance between him and Pei Qiqi and gestured for her not to come closer.

Pei Qiqi didn't understand what he was doing.

In the next moment, Nie Tian placed his hands in front of his chest, palms opposite each other, and the various types of power within him broke out violently.

A chaotic magnetic field with a eight-meter-radius was immediately formed around him.

PHEW! PHEW!

At the same time, as a thought appeared in Li Langfeng's mind, some of the dark-green miasma that had been floating in midair began to converge on Nie Tian from different parts of the valley.

As the poisonous smoke grew increasingly condensed, poisonous creatures such as serpents, scorpions, and centipedes formed. They were so lifelike that it seemed Li Langfeng had infused each of them with a wisp of his psychic awareness.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

More dark-green smoke was rising from the ground where Nie Tian stood. However, as soon as the wisps of smoke entered his chaotic magnetic field, they were immediately ripped apart and ground to tiny bits.

Later, when the poisonous creatures Li Langfeng had created entered Nie Tian's magnetic field, they suffered the same fate.

Li Langfeng watched as the poisonous creatures he had vested with his own psychic awareness were torn apart and reduced to wisps of smoke.

The smoke grew fainter and fainter as the magnetic field continued to grind it down.

Faint wisps of poisonous smoke were pushed to the outer verge of the magnetic field, so that they could never harm Nie Tian, who was at the center of the magnetic field.

“Strange kid...” Li Langfeng was increasingly surprised; the gaze he used to look at Nie Tian was filled with confusion.

Standing in front of Shi Qing, he subconsciously stepped towards Nie Tian.

At that moment, Shi Qing and Pei Qiqi were also enveloped by two clusters of condensed, poisonous smoke.

The two of them were struggling to contend against the erosion of the toxins, and didn't dare to make any rash actions, since they both discovered that Li Langfeng had refined some of the tainted spiritual Qi in the mountain range and added it to his poisonous smoke, making his poisonous smoke even more powerful and dangerous.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

After forming his chaotic magnetic field, Nie Tian slowly stepped closer towards the dark-green wall of water.

The moment his magnetic field made contact with the wall of water that had blocked his and Pei Qiqi's path of escape, it began to twist and show signs of splitting.

Pei Qiqi, who had been staring at Nie Tian the whole time, said with her eyes lit up, “Break that ward, Hua Tian! We need to leave as soon as possible!”

She knew that she could only rely on manipulating spatial rifts to create an opening in Li Langfeng’s wall of water. However, Li Langfeng had seen through her intentions and dealt a great blow to her soul, forcing her to abandon the idea.

Even though she couldn’t see through the strange magnetic field around Nie Tian and determine what it was, she was aware that Nie Tian had managed to keep the poisonous smoke away with it after his green jade bracelet had lost its effectiveness.

Most unbelievable of all, it had even stopped and destroyed the numerous poisonous creatures Li Langfeng had used to attack him.

At that moment, it suddenly occurred to her that Nie Tian had showed up like a ghost and single-handedly taken out a dozen Dark Moon experts when she and Cai Yuan had been trapped by Ma Jiu and his men.

With those thoughts, Pei Qiqi’s eyes shone even brighter.

Shi Qing also saw what was happening to Nie Tian while exerting all measures to fend off the toxic smoke. “Young Lord was right. This Hua Tian kid is indeed beyond ordinary.”

He couldn’t help but admit that Cai Yuan was a perfect judge for

talent, and he finally came to realize that earlier, when others had gone after Dark Moon experts, Nie Tian hadn't stood by out of fear.

He just hadn't felt the necessity to join the battle when it would be a guaranteed victory.

He had chosen to be an onlooker because he didn't want to compete with the other Blood Skull members for contribution points.

Nie Tian, who was focused on tearing open the dark-green wall of water with his chaotic magnetic field, didn't instantly respond after hearing Pei Qiqi's words.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

He raised one hand in the air and began to gather the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth to form a spiritual energy ball.

Within seconds, a misty, gray spiritual energy ball formed, with violent energy fluctuations coming from within it.

"Go!" To everyone's surprise, Nie Tian turned around and shot the spiritual energy ball towards Li Langfeng as numerous types of power collided with one another in the limited space, making it more and more unstable.

RUUUUMBLE!

The spiritual energy ball exploded right before it reached Li Langfeng, sending countless green, blue, black, and purple spots of light into its surroundings, engulfing Li Langfeng.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Without even checking the result of his attack, Nie Tian immediately concentrated his attention and formed another spiritual energy ball.

Before the bits of impurities from his first spiritual energy ball could dissipate, his second spiritual energy ball arrived.

RUUUUMBLE!

RUUUUMBLE!

RUUUUMBLE!

With the same method, Nie Tian continued to form spiritual energy balls and cast them towards Li Liangfeng. The mad bombardment turned the area where Li Liangfeng was standing into a large cluster of multicolored mist.

# Chapter 271: The Opposite Result

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In the mountain valley, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing were flabbergasted...

Before, Pei Qiqi had only seen Nie Tian fight Yang Ling relying purely on his physical strength, and Shi Qing hadn't seen Nie Tian fight at all.

They couldn't believe Nie Tian dared to fight Li Langfeng head-on when he could have used his strange magnetic field to tear open the dark-green wall of water and escape.

The spiritual energy balls Nie Tian had created contained different types of refined power, which became extremely unstable after being pressed into such a small area.

After they exploded, Li Langfeng immediately disappeared in a cluster of multicolored, corrosive bright spots, which were the different types of impurities that shouldn't belong to this realm.

Shi Qing was taken aback by the scene.

From what he could tell, if it had been him who had been bombarded by Nie Tian's spiritual energy balls, he probably would have sustained severe injuries.

However, Nie Tian was only at the early Heaven stage...



The fact that he could launch such mighty attacks without receiving any boost from a spiritual tool when he had such a low cultivation base made Shi Qing question his own eyes.

“He’s only at the Heaven stage, and his battle prowess is already so formidable. What kind of existence will he become once he enters the Worldly realm?” These thoughts gave rise to great turbulence in Shi Qing’s mind, which even caused the power he had been channeling into his spiritual energy shield to fluctuate.

“No wonder our young lord, for the first time, decided to personally offer a guest elder’s identity medallion to him, knowing he was only at the Heaven stage.

“It’s our fortune that we made the offer first and he agreed.

“If he was discovered and admitted by the Wild Fire or the Dark Moon, given a few years, he would have become the Blood Skull’s nightmare!”

While Shi Qing grew excited in presence of Nie Tian’s amazing battle prowess, Nie Tian quietly stopped attacking.

Actually, it wouldn’t be very consuming to form more spiritual energy balls with the technique he had picked up in the mysterious land.

What he did was basically borrow the different types of power that already existed in the spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

If he wanted to, he could have continued to create dozens or even hundreds more of them and used them to bombard Li Langfeng, if he was given the time.

Nie Tian didn't stop because he had run out of strength. Rather, it was because he had sensed something via one of his Heaven Eyes.

Countless bright spots of various colors filled the area where the series of spiritual energy balls had exploded. The various types of power had even left the ground in a disastrous state.

Even the Heaven Eye couldn't see through the floating, multicolored mist and get a clear view of Li Langfeng.

However, since the Heaven Eye carried a wisp of Nie Tian's soul power, it could detect any sign of life within its range.

It discovered that Li Langfeng's life aura was very strange; it was weak, on the verge of death, in one second and extremely strong in another.

From what Nie Tian could tell, when Li Langfeng's life aura was the most vigorous, he could have rushed out of the hazardous area and avoided the damage.

However, he didn't.

Furthermore, via the Heaven Eye, Nie Tian had also noted that Li Langfeng had been gathering power, but soon gave up for some reason.

It was as if he had deliberately given up resistance and let Nie Tian bombard him with more spiritual energy balls.

After sensing the anomaly, Nie Tian stopped and, with a grim face, he focused all his attention on the area Li Langfeng was in.

At that moment, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing had a feeling that the pressure that had been weighing on them had suddenly been lifted.

The two of them had originally been surrounded by two clusters of condensed, dark-green smoke.

After Nie Tian launched his bombardment of spiritual energy balls, all the dark-green poisonous smoke in the valley quietly left them and gathered towards Li Langfeng.

Therefore, no longer needing to resist the poisonous smoke, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing joined Nie Tian as the three of them frowned and fixed their gazes on the area Li Langfeng was in.

Moments later, they discovered that green spots were gradually vanishing from the multicolored, vision-blocking mist of impurities.

As far as Nie Tian knew, all the green spots originated from

poisonous spiritual Qi that belonged to domains that were far away, and they were the part that made the Spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth in the Realm of Split Void poisonous and corrosive to human flesh.

However, at that moment, those toxic green spots were disappearing from the multicolored mist of impurities at a rate noticeable to the naked eye.

Meanwhile, he discovered via his Heaven Eye that the intensity of Li Langfeng's life aura was climbing, and gradually became as violent as an ocean during storm.

Moments later...

The mist of foreign impurities wore off, and Li Langfeng appeared in Nie Tian's sight.

After being bombarded by Nie Tian's spiritual energy balls, he seemed rather bedraggled. His garments were torn, and every piece of exposed skin was covered in bloody wounds.

However, fine threads of green light, which resembled slithering snakes, could be seen within those wounds.

Those threads of green light had originated from the tainted spiritual Qi that Nie Tian had used to form his energy balls, which he had used to bombard Li Langfeng.

However, for some reason, Li Langfeng had managed to absorb them into his ripped-open flesh.

Li Langfeng, who seemed in sore straits, coughed again.

Unlike before, it wasn't a dry cough this time. With every cough, he spit out a mouthful of grimy blood.

Multicolored spots could be seen in the goo he spit to the ground.

That was when something suddenly occurred to Nie Tian.

He remembered the time when he had used the Blood Sect's Blood Refining Incantation to refine the Golden Stone Rhino's blood. The gooey thing that had stuck to the bottom of the wooden barrel was very similar to the thing Li Langfeng just spit out.

It was none other than the impurities within the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

However, gray, black, and purple spots could be seen in the gooey things Li Langfeng was spitting out; green spots were the only one missing.

It was because all the green impurities had been kept within Li Langfeng's ripped-open flesh, wiggling like small spiritual snakes.

"He actually can refine and absorb the toxins from my attack!"

Staring at the disgusting goo that had come out of Li Langfeng's mouth, Nie Tian realized what was happening.

“Why did you stop?” Looking like a evil ghost, Li Langfeng grinned and said after coughing up another mouthful of impurities.

Before Nie Tian could answer, he nodded and said, “Hua Tian, is it? Good, very good.” His eyes were deep and gruesome. “I’ve changed my mind. Now I want you to form more of your energy balls and hit me with them... continually.”

Then, he coughed as he waved at Pei Qiqi, saying, “You may leave now, and you can keep the Dark Moon’s teleportation portal. Just leave this Hua Tian kid with me. I need him, and I need him alive.”

Although Li Langfeng seemed rather miserable on the outside after being bombarded by Nie Tian, the spiritual power within him was surging at a terrifying speed. It seemed as if thanks to the threads of green light wiggling in his wounds, his battle prowess was increasing by the second.

At that point, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing also realized what was going on.

The spiritual energy balls Nie Tian had used to attack Li Langfeng had actually helped him instead!

Since Li Langfeng practiced a special poison incantation, he was

able to extract and absorb toxins from Nie Tian's spiritual energy balls, and boost his own strength with them!

That was why he had forgotten about the teleportation portal and set his mind on capturing Nie Tian alive.

At that moment, Shi Qing's voice suddenly echoed out. "You should go, Miss Pei. You don't know me well enough to fight to the death for me, and since Nie Tian isn't your master's disciple, you're not obligated to stay for him either."

Shi Qing knew that if Pei Qiqi died here, her master would definitely be furious, and since she had participated in the Blood Skull's operation, her master might vent her wrath on the Blood Skull.

After realizing that Li Langfeng had become even stronger, Shi Qing felt desperate and helpless. But as a senior member of the Blood Skull, he could think from the Blood Skull's point of view at the moment of life or death. It was quite impressive.

However, Pei Qiqi didn't say anything after hearing Shi Qing's urge. Instead, she turned to look at Nie Tian.

Nie Tian said with a mysterious smile, "You don't need to worry about me."

## Chapter 272: Leaving

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Nie Tian agreed with Shi Qing's take on the matter, as he also thought Pei Qiqi had every reason to leave.

He and Pei Qiqi weren't close enough for her to stay and fight to the death, much less Shi Qing.

Furthermore, Li Langfeng had even allowed her to leave with the teleportation portal.

"Alright, you two take care." Eyes glittering, Pei Qiqi took Shi Qing's advice and made what seemed to be the wisest decision.

With these words, she indeed turned around and left.

"Smart choice," Li Langfeng said softly.

As Pei Qiqi stepped away, a thought appeared in Li Langfeng's mind, and the dark-green water wall that had blocked her path of escape seeped back into the depths of the earth, giving way to her.

Pei Qiqi blurred into action and shot out of the valley like a flash of lightning.

After seeing her leave, Nie Tian took a deep breath as he summoned more strength and expanded his chaotic magnetic field to a ten-meter radius.



Then, he commanded his seven Heaven Eyes to spread out and observe Li Langfeng from every direction.

At the same time, he secretly sent a wisp of psychic awareness into his bracelet of holding.

Pei Qiqi leaving made him face a tough decision.

He was prepared to use the Flame Dragon Armor when it was a moment of life or death.

Before he had set foot in the Realm of Split Void, Hua Mu had warned him that he shouldn't use the Flame Dragon Armor unless he was in a life-threatening situation.

The Flame Dragon Armor was a Spirit Channeling grade treasure widely known throughout the entire Domain of the Falling Stars. Once it appeared, Nie Tian's identity would be exposed.

At that time, not only would the Flame God Sect from the Realm of Dark Underworld come for it, but the Heaven Palace Sect would also descend upon the Realm of Split Void to strip him of the two fragmentary star marks on his chest.

There was only one way to use the Flame Dragon Armor and make sure the fact that it was in his possession didn't leak out, which was to kill everyone who saw the Flame Dragon Armor.

With Pei Qiqi gone, Shi Qing, Li Langfeng, and Nie Tian were the only ones in the mountain valley.

If both of them died in the valley, his identity would remain concealed, and it would still be safe for him to stay in the Realm of Split Void.

As Nie Tian received a wisp of vague consciousness from the Flame Dragon Armor in his bracelet of holding, he understood that it had come from the Flame Dragon Armor's soul.

From that response, he learned that if he wished to, he could summon the Flame Dragon Armor to fight for him when the crucial moment came. This made him feel a bit more spirited and secure.

As much as he disliked the idea, Nie Tian decided to kill Li Langfeng with the Flame Dragon Armor after Li Langfeng had killed Shi Qing.

Even though Shi Qing was devoted and loyal to the Blood Skull, he had never thought for Nie Tian's safety. He had urged Pei Qiqi to leave because he feared that her master might vent her anger on the Blood Skull after learning that she had died in a Blood Skull operation.

Considering that, Nie Tian didn't have any mental barrier to Li Langfeng killing Shi Qing and him killing Li Langfeng to save himself.

With a plan in his mind, Nie Tian seemed rather calm and composed.

After shooting a glance at Nie Tian out of the corner of his eyes, Li Langfeng turned around and walked towards Shi Qing. “If you behave, it doesn’t need to be painful. Your head will demonstrate that I’ve done my part as a guest elder of the Dark Moon’s after I return to the Land of the Abandoned, and they will reward me handsomely for killing you for them. Now that Cai Yue and Pei Qiqi are both safe and gone, you may go in peace.”

CHING!

As Li Langfeng shook the bell in his hand, a wave of dreadful psychic shock pierced into Shi Qing’s mind.

Nie Tian, however, didn’t feel any turbulence in his soul sea. That was when he realized that Li Langfeng had intentionally spared Nie Tian. From the look of it, he was truly determined to capture Nie Tian alive.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

As soon as the bell rang, the countless threads of green light that had been wiggling in Li Langfeng’s ripped-open wounds shot out towards Shi Qing.

Shining with bright, green light, they almost instantly penetrated Shi Qing’s protective light shield.

BOOM!

The moment Shi Qing's protective light shield exploded, he couldn't help but trudge backwards.

At the same time, the solid ground underneath him began to crack, and fragmented rocks and earth began to rise up into the air.

In a brief moment, numerous rocks filled the space between Shi Qing and Li Langfeng.

“Earth power!” Observing from the side, the instant Nie Tian saw the rocks rise up, he realized that Shi Qing's cultivation attribute was earth.

RUUUUMBLE!

More rocks in the vicinity seemed to be answering Shi Qing's summoning as they also rose up into the air and hovered around Li Langfeng.

In the next moment, close to a hundred giant rocks shot towards Li Langfeng at the same time. The scene was rather spectacular.

However, like a ghost, the skinny Li Langfeng swiftly shifted his position through the spaces between the rocks without running

into any trouble.

“Gravity upheaval!” Shi Qing let out an explosive shout.

Immediately afterward, all the huge rocks plummeted to the earth like meteors, creating loud crashes.

Li Langfeng, who was shifting in midair, was also instantly dragged down towards the earth as the gravitational field around him changed violently.

“It won’t change anything.” Li Langfeng shook his head, and in the next moment, numerous dark-green beams of light shot out from within his flat sleeve.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

One huge rock after another exploded into tiny pieces after the dark-green light beams shone on them.

Then, Li Langfeng gently shook his bell once again.

Already struggling to maintain control of his gravitational field, Shi Qing let out a muffled groan, and blood continued to flow out of the corner of his mouth.

Due to the violent strike to his soul, the gravitational field he had summoned at full strength also soon vanished.

At that moment, Li Langfeng pointed at Shi Qing with his non-bell-bearing hand from afar.

A curtain of dark-green water immediately shot out from the ground behind Shi Qing like a reverse waterfall, and rapidly moved towards him with the momentum to engulf him.

Simultaneously, wisps of green, toxic smoke were continuously rising from under Shi Qing's feet, forcing Shi Qing to face attacks on two fronts.

“Even Gu Yu wouldn't be able to match my strength, much less you,” Li Langfeng said with a poised face. “I've spent quite a few years at the late Greater Heaven stage, and I'm only one step away from entering the Worldly realm. No Qi warrior under the Worldly realm could truly pose a threat to me.”

FIZZ! FIZZ!

While he spoke, the dark-green water curtain and poisonous smoke surrounded Shi Qing from above his head and under his feet.

CHING!

Li Langfeng didn't stop shaking his bell. With every gentle move of his wrist, Shi Qing coughed up a mouthful of blood.

Since his soul was under attack, Shi Qing couldn't focus and summon the strength to ward off the poisonous water and smoke.

Not only did they contain the power that Li Langfeng had infused them with, but they also contained deadly toxins. With only a few breaths of the smoke, Shi Qing felt light-headed.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

As Shi Qing's garments rotted away, a set of grayish-yellow spiritual armor was revealed from under them. Detailed and elegant patterns were carved on the armor; spiritual auras flowed in it like a man's meridians.

The stones that had scattered all over the place seemed to be drawn in by his spiritual armor, and madly converged on Shi Qing.

In less than ten seconds, a thick layer of rock formed over Shi Qing's entire body.

At first glance, Shi Qing seemed to have been petrified and turned into a human-shaped rock.

It appeared that Shi Qing was using this special method to ward off the poisonous water and smoke.

However, even though his spiritual armor had miraculously stopped the harm, there was a major flaw to this method, which was that he couldn't move at all.

This special magic came with the spiritual armor, and it was only meant for desperate situations when the enemy launched a full-force attack.

Afterwards, its owner could deactivate the petrified state and continue fighting.

However, that wasn't an option for Shi Qing. As soon as he called off the petrified state, he would be once again exposed to the corrosive water and smoke.

It was this desperate situation that had forced him to resort to this special spell.

“You’ve petrified yourself to resist the corrosion, so what?” Li Langfeng shook his head as he paced towards Shi Qing, “It’s not going to change the result. You’ll die anyways. It’s just a matter of time.”

FIZZ! FIZZ!

At that moment, Nie Tian suddenly heard buzzing sounds coming from behind him.

He turned around to look, and found that a few spatial rifts were gathering and moving towards the valley from the distant horizon.



Puzzled, he commanded one of his Heaven Eyes to fly towards the spatial rifts.

Soon, he discovered that Pei Qiqi was stand amongst a dozen slithering spatial rifts, controlling them as she stepped closer towards the valley.

“Pei Qiqi!” Upon seeing her return, a shudder ran through Nie Tian’s body; mixed emotions rose in his heart.

Pei Qiqi shouldn’t have returned. Yet, she did.

Earlier, when Cai Yue had left, Pei Qiqi had grabbed him and sped away at the first possible moment, never even taking Shi Qing’s life or death into consideration.

It showed that Shi Qing wasn’t important to Pei Qiqi at all. Hence, there was only one explanation for her return: she had come back for Nie Tian!

It was as if Pei Qiqi knew that Nie Tian would be able to hear her, even from such a long distance away. She shouted into the sky as she marched towards the valley, “Let’s go kill that sicko!”

Upon hearing Pei Qiqi’s words via his Heaven Eye, a vicious expression appeared on Nie Tian’s resolute face as he charged towards Li Langfeng, enveloped by his chaotic magnetic field.

## Chapter 273: Exerting Every Move

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“Ah...” After noticing Nie Tian’s actions, Li Langfeng shook his head with his back facing Nie Tian. “Another brat who doesn’t understand the immensity of Heaven and Earth.”

In Li Langfeng’s eyes, Nie Tian’s actions were very unwise and meaningless.

CRACK!

One beam of green light after another continued to shoot out of Li Langfeng’s flat sleeve and carve at the layer of hard rock covering Shi Qing’s body.

Although the layer of hard rock created by Shi Qing’s spiritual armor could protect him from a number of serious attacks, once it was broken, Shi Qing would be instantly exposed to Li Langfeng’s toxins.

The toxins would rapidly infiltrate his body and eat him away from both the inside and outside.

By that time, Li Langfeng wouldn’t even need to do anything. The toxins alone would be enough to kill Shi Qing.

Therefore, the moment Shi Qing petrified himself, Li Langfeng knew that Shi Qing would die beyond the shadow of a doubt.

All he needed to do was take his time and grind down the layer of hard rock covering Shi Qing.

He didn't even attach the least importance to Nie Tian's actions, since, normally speaking, an early Heaven stage young man couldn't possibly pose any threat to him.

CHING!

He continued to shake the bell in his hand.

The sound of the bell gave rise to ripples in the originally silent air in the valley. Within every ripple, there lay a wisp of Li Langfeng's psychic awareness.

The ripples soon spread to Nie Tian and entered his chaotic magnetic field.

As soon as they did, Li Langfeng's psychic awareness was distorted.

Li Langfeng's eyebrows immediately furrowed as he was struck by a feeling that his psychic awareness was being wrapped by different types of power and gradually pulled apart.

Within a very short time, his refined psychic awareness was ripped into tiny bits and pushed to the outermost part of Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field.

As he commanded the scattered bits of his psychic awareness to get closer to the center of the magnetic field where Nie Tian was, the connection between him and his psychic awareness was suddenly cut off.

A shocked look suddenly became visible in his eyes.

Keh! Keh!

He began to cough violently again, his pale face becoming increasingly ghastly and sickly.

A gruesome, ice-cold aura burst forth from his heart, along with a burning killing intent.

WHOOSH!

In the next moment, a pale-gray skull flew out of his ring of holding and whizzed towards Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field.

It seemed to be the skull of a spirit beast. Two clusters of ghostly green light were shimmering within its hollow eye sockets.

The sizable spirit beast skull unleashed a gruesome, ice-cold, murderous aura as it spun and fixed its ghostly green eyes on Nie Tian

Meanwhile, the light its eyes emanated grew increasingly bright and dazzling.

ZZZZZLA!

As it entered Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field, the skull unleashed green bolts of lightning, which constantly clashed with the various types of power within the magnetic field.

While the skull stared at Nie Tian, a vague image of Li Langfeng slowly became visible in each of its ghostly green eyes, which seemed to be examining the types of power within Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field.

BOOM! BOOM!

Under the gruesome gaze, Nie Tian's soul shook violently, giving rise to torrential waves in his sea of psychic awareness.

Nie Tian immediately experienced a heart-wrenching stabbing pain in his head, causing howls to escape his mouth.

Small amounts of blood began to flow out of his ears and the corners of his eyes, making him look sinister and scary.

"You! Behave! Don't ask for trouble!" Li Langfeng's voice echoed out from the two images in the skull's ghostly eyes. "I need you alive. But if you don't appreciate my kindness, I'm happy to deal you a few heavy blows and watch you suffer."

Li Langfeng's voice had come from the spirit beast skull, yet in real life, he was still facing Shi Qing, showing Nie Tian his back.

From the look of it, he had no problem attacking Nie Tian with his spirit beast skull while carving into the layer of rock on Shi Qing himself.

With an excruciating pain in his head, Nie Tian screamed into the heavens while blood was dripping down his face. It seemed as if he had gone mad.

At that moment, his soul was in chaos, and he could no longer gather any strength to launch a counterattack.

He could only watch as the ghostly green eyes morphed and magically appeared within his soul.

There was nothing he could do as the ghostly eyes rampaged across Nie Tian's sea of psychic awareness, ripping wisps of his psychic power into shreds.

"It's a psychic attack again!" Nie Tian roared angrily in his heart.

When a high-level Qi warrior fought a low-level Qi warrior, the high-level Qi warrior's exquisite psychic magics were usually the most effective measure to crush the low-level Qi warrior.

Just as a strong desire to fight back rose in Nie Tian's heart, a chilly, calming aura suddenly shone upon his sea of psychic awareness.

The seven fragmentary stars that hung high over his sea of psychic awareness moved silently in some sort of pattern.

Before long, they arrived above the two ghostly eyes and trapped them, as if the fragmentary stars had formed a spell formation.

In the next moment, seven beams of starlight shone out of the seven fragmentary stars.

Like seven falling stars, they converged on the two ghostly eyes with great precision.

PUFF! PUFF!

The ghostly eyes instantly vanished from Nie Tian's soul without leaving a single trace.

ROOOOOOAR!

Li Langfeng, who had his back facing Nie Tian, suddenly let out an agonized howl.

The beams of green light he was using to carve Shi Qing's rock armor missed their target and shot elsewhere due to the sudden

pain in his head.

The sudden anguish even caused the two clusters of green light in the skull's eye sockets to go out. The two images of Li Langfeng in them also disappeared along with them.

Li Langfeng turned around abruptly. "Y-you?!"

The badly mangled Li Langfeng already looked like a ghoul, with shimmering green light slithering in his ripped-open flesh.

At this moment, as he shot a fierce glance at Nie Tian, his eyes filled with ruthlessness and rage, making him look like a devil that had just broken out of the the underworld and was going to destroy the Heavens and extinguish the Earth, along with every living being.

He glowered at Nie Tian and asked, "What's in your soul?"

By using a profound psychic technique, he had sent two strands of psychic awareness into Nie Tian's soul in form of two ghostly eyes. However, all he could see and attack through them was Nie Tian's sea of psychic awareness, not the seven fragmentary stars that hung high above it.

Shortly afterwards, his two strands of psychic awareness had been destroyed by a mysterious force.

Since he was still at the late Greater Heaven stage and hadn't



entered the Worldly realm, his soul hadn't been upgraded to the point where he could develop soul power.

Therefore, he only had psychic power at his disposal, which couldn't detect the existence of the more advanced soul power that constituted the fragmentary stars.

Even when his two wisps of psychic power were annihilated by the soul power from the seven fragmentary stars, he still didn't know what had happened.

The only thing he was certain of was that Nie Tian's soul was different from those of others; something in it was capable of exterminating his psychic awareness.

“Impressive kid!” Li Langfeng grinned as it seemed he was going to laugh, but he never made a sound.

WHOOSH!

The sizable spirit beast skull suddenly flew out of Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field and landed on Li Langfeng's splayed hand.

In the next moment, the countless threads of green light that had been wiggling within his numerous wounds sudden swam into the air and arced their way into the skull.

After receiving the lights, small flesh fibers and veins began to grow on the originally pale-gray, fleshless skull at a noticeable

speed.

At the same time, an intense, bloody aura spread out from the spirit beast skull. Standing dozens of meters away, Nie Tian's heart began to pound upon seeing the scene via his Heaven Eye.

After being infused with the green lights, the lifeless skull seemed to be suddenly vested with life.

Two clusters of green light once again burned in the skull's eye sockets, and Li Langfeng's images once again appeared in them.

As the skull shone with dazzlingly bright-green light, Li Langfeng rammed it into Shi Qing's hard rock protection.

**BANG!!!**

Upon impact, a large piece fell off of Shi Qing's solid rock protection.

The giant armor of rock was sent flying backwards along with Shi Qing's body.

When Shi Qing hit the ground, his eyes grew somewhat dimmer as blood slowly seeped out of his rock protection and dripped onto the ground.

At first glance, it was as if a giant piece of rock was bleeding.

Li Langfeng glared at Nie Tian and said, “I don’t want to kill you now. I’ll have my fun with you when I’ve gotten rid of Shi Qing.”

Now that he knew there was something special about Nie Tian’s soul, he didn’t intend to unleash more psychic magics on Nie Tian. Rather, he planned to kill Shi Qing as quickly as possible, and then take his time to explore and learn Nie Tian’s secrets.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

However, at that very moment, a number of spatial rifts appeared at the perimeter of the mountain valley.

Like lightning bolts slithering in midair, they rapidly moved towards the center of the valley where Li Langfeng was standing.

Under the spatial rifts, a hint of uncommon redness appeared on Pei Qiqi’s cheeks, making her as beautiful as peach blossoms.

With a single glance, Nie Tian realized that the redness on her face was caused by her overconsumption of spiritual power and the fact that her Qi and blood were very unstable.

ZZZZZLA!

One of the slender spatial rifts took the initiative to slash towards Li Langfeng like a giant, bright sword.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Four Ethereal Swords also appeared out of nowhere and pierced towards Li Langfeng's chest.

In the meantime, spatial energy took form of numerous light blades as they rushed down towards Li Langfeng from midair like a shoal of blood-thirsty fish.

From the look of it, Pei Qiqi had gone all-out.

“Miss Pei!” Upon seeing Pei Qiqi, a shudder ran through Shi Qing's body as he seemed to know what to do now.

Covered in hard rock, Shi Qing realized that the best opportunity to launch a counterattack had come, considering Pei Qiqi had unleashed numerous spatial attacks on Li Langfeng.

BANG!

The layer of rock over Shi Qing's body exploded into pieces like broken china.

After deactivating the petrified state, Shi Qing roared angrily as he formed hand seals, once again causing the earth to tremble and the gravitational field to change.

# Chapter 274: Burning Killing Intent

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Attacked by one spatial rift, four Ethereal Swords, and numerous spatial light blades, the skinny, ghoul-like Li Langfeng was limited to a small space.

Every time he moved his body, he risked being cut.

Meanwhile, the gravitational field where he was standing had undergone an upheaval and the ground was shaking unceasingly, making it very hard for him to move about.

Observing from afar, Nie Tian could see that as Li Langfeng moved about to avoid Pei Qiqi's attacks, more and more bloody wounds appeared on his arms and waist.

“You dare to come back!” Being attacked by Shi Qing and Pei Qiqi at the same time, Li Langfeng was truly enraged. Blood dripped down his garments as he fixed his fierce eyes on Pei Qiqi and roared, “Do you really think I fear your master so much that I'll never dare to kill you?”

CHING!

The crisp sound of a bell once again rang out. Simultaneously, surging waves of a psychic attack rushed towards Pei Qiqi's mind.

Focused on using various profound spatial magics, Pei Qiqi let out a muffled groan as blood dripped down the corner of her sparkling,

red lips.

“Go!” The fleshy spirit beast skull that had been given flesh unleashed ghostly, green lightning bolts into its surroundings as it charged towards Pei Qiqi, its devilish eyes fixed on Pei Qiqi the entire time.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Two Ethereal Swords suddenly disappeared from Li Langfeng’s side and appeared next to the spirit beast skull in a split second.

CLANK! CLANK!

Upon contact, the two Ethereal Swords spun as they bounced off the surface of the skull. Meanwhile, sparks were created where they made contact, as if the skull was made of rolled steel.

On the contrary, Pei Qiqi coughed up a mouthful of blood, as if the skull had dealt a heavy blow to her, causing her to stagger a few steps backwards.

As she trudged backwards, a trail of deep footprints were created in the ground, and her ample chest was painted red by her blood.

“Go to hell!” Shi Qing shouted as he cast the spell he was the most skilled with: Earth Protrusions.

Sharp stone protrusions suddenly rose from the trembling earth and pierced Li Langfeng's feet, causing them to bleed ceaselessly.

One after another, numerous stone protrusions pierced out of the ground where Li Langfeng was standing.

Since he hadn't entered the Worldly realm, he wasn't capable of soaring in the air yet. Furthermore, he was confined to a rather limited space by the spatial rifts, Ethereal Swords, and spatial light blades.

Therefore, when numerous stone protrusions stuck out of the ground, he was forced to face attacks coming from both the ground and the air. With one wrong step, he would have his legs pierced through.

However, when he was focused on avoiding the stone protrusions, he wouldn't be able to fend off Pei Qiqi's airborne attacks at the same time.

Before long, more wounds were cut open on Li Langfeng from his arms to feet.

With every step he took, blood flowed out of those wounds and dripped down his garments, painting the ground red.

At this point, nothing but rage could be seen in Li Langfeng's eyes as he blurted, "You're seeking death!"

Like poisonous snakes, thousands of threads of ghostly green light swooped towards Shi Qing and Pei Qiqi, carrying a disgusting, foul smell.

To Nie Tian's surprise, even though Li Langfeng was losing his senses, he was bent on keeping Nie Tian alive.

Not a single ray of toxic light or smoke shot towards Nie Tian.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

Both Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing formed light shields to ward off the incoming attacks.

However, Nie Tian could tell with a brief observation that the two of them were barely hanging on, as they were forced to step backwards under the strong impacts caused by the rays of raging green energy.

Every time they trudged backwards, Nie Tian could hear subtle, bone-breaking sounds coming from within them.

Even though the two of them had exerted all their resources and dealt serious blows to Li Langfeng, Li Langfeng had returned the favor by inflicting even more severe damage on them.

As a peak Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior who was on the verge of breaking into the Worldly realm, Li Langfeng's strength and his grotesque poison magics were indeed formidable.



SHEW!

Seeing that Shi Qing and Pei Qiqi were on the verge of collapsing, Nie Tian once again charged towards Li Langfeng.

“Clear a path for me!” Nie Tian yelled as he dashed towards Li Langfeng.

Trudging backwards, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing both heard Nie Tian’s words and, without any hesitation, summoned their remaining strength to assist him.

Just as Nie Tian was about to reach Li Langfeng, all the stone protrusions, light blades, and spatial rifts simultaneously moved to the side.

Without meeting any obstructions, Nie Tian rapidly arrived in front of Li Langfeng.

“Do you have a death wish as well?” Looking Nie Tian in the eyes, Li Langfeng grinned and splayed his hand, the fleshed spirit beast skull flying into his palm in the next moment,

Without any delay, he lunged towards Nie Tian and smashed the skull towards Nie Tian with great force.

However, as soon as he entered Nie Tian’s chaotic magnetic field,

a shocked look appeared in his eyes, and he immediately let out bloodcurdling screams.

Completely enveloped by Nie Tian's chaotic magnetic field, his badly-mangled body and even the wiggling threads of green light in his split wounds began to twist.

It wasn't long before his skin was ripped open and his body started to bloat, as if he could explode at any moment.

Even still, he bore the pain and rammed the skull in his hand into Nie Tian's incoming fist.

BOOM!

The moment Nie Tian's Rage Punch, which he had summoned with eighty percent of his strength, met Li Langfeng's spirit beast skull, Li Langfeng was sent flying backwards, along with his skull.

The same went for Nie Tian, as he was also sent flying out of the area filled with stone protrusions and spatial light blades.

As he sailed through the air in a perfect arc, he found out that bones in his hand had been smashed, and a violent force had been infused into his flesh and blood through the contact.

He could keenly feel that wherever the force spread, his meridians were ruptured, and fissures were even created in his bones.

From the look of it, both he and Li Langfeng had sustained serious injuries after the violent clash.

BOOM!

Nie Tian crashed heavily onto the ground. Feeling powerless all over, he could tell that the force Li Langfeng had left in him was rampaging within him, damaging his meridians and bones.

Li Langfeng, on the other hand, wasn't in a better situation than him.

Originally, Li Langfeng had been commanding strands of green light and smoke to attack Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing. Even though the two had spared no effort to defend themselves, they had sustained measurable injuries.

However, after suffering this most recent heavy blow, Li Langfeng couldn't even maintain control over the power he had sent after them.

As the destructive light and smoke dissipated into thin air, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing collapsed to the ground, completely worn out.

Nie Tian had landed fairly close to Pei Qiqi. He examined her with his Heaven Eye, and discovered that not only had she used up her spiritual power, but she was injured so badly that she could barely move.

Although Shi Qing was at the Greater Heaven stage, he was also in sore straits. However, he was able to move about at least.

Then, Nie Tian commanded his Heaven Eyes to examine Li Langfeng.

Bones fractured, flesh torn open, Li Langfeng was lying on his back with his belly facing the heavens, like a dying toad.

All of a sudden, a thin layer of green light enveloped his body.

Via the Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian discovered that a mysterious energy was surging inside of him.

Frenzied killing intent could be seen in Li Langfeng's eyes, as if he was only lying there to heal and recover.

From the look of it, it wouldn't be long before he was ready to fight again.

"This man is indeed terrifyingly strong!" Nie Tian was shocked to his core when he found that Li Langfeng was recovering at a high speed.

In contrast, Pei Qiqi and Shi Qing had already exhausted all their measures and strength. Nie Tian himself was still suffering from the corrosion of Li Langfeng's attack. There hadn't been a single

second that passed without him feeling the stabbing pain.

Standing several hundred meters from each other, Nie Tian and Shi Qing exchanged a glance.

“He’s still alive!” With these words, Nie Tian deactivated his chaotic magnetic field and put on his jade bracelet instead to protect himself from the toxic spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth as he dashed towards Pei Qiqi, who hadn’t been able to stand up.

Under her astounded gaze, Nie Tian helped her up, hefted her onto his back, and ran out of the mountain valley.

Upon seeing Nie Tian’s actions and the green light shield attached to Li Langfeng’s body, Shi Qing immediately realized that Li Langfeng was merely in recovery, and would soon be able to fight again.

Therefore, without the slightest hesitation, he drew upon his only remaining strength and charged out of the valley after Nie Tian.

After all, neither he nor Nie Tian were confident that they would be able to break Li Langfeng’s protective light shield and kill him.

In this situation, running away was undoubtedly the wisest decision.

As soon as Nie Tian made it out of the valley, carrying Pei Qiqi on

his back, Shi Qing caught up to him.

“Let’s split up and hope for the best.” With a grim expression on his face, Shi Qing took a deep breath and charged towards the direction that the Blood Skull members had left in, hoping to join forces with Gu Yu and the others.

Seeing that Shi Qing had sped off, Nie Tian could only go in the opposite direction.

At least by doing that, after having fully recovered, Li Langfeng would have to choose to chase after one of them, and thus the chances of the other’s survival would rise significantly.

Although it was unlikely that Shi Qing would encounter his own forces within a short time, it would happen eventually, given Li Langfeng was stalled long enough.

By that time, Shi Qing would probably survive this calamity.

On the other hand, the path Nie Tian had chosen would lead him to a secluded part of the mountain range where it would be unlikely for him to run into anyone, much less any Blood Skull members.

The reason he had chosen this path was because it was filled with active spatial rifts.

Once Pei Qiqi was able to restore her battle prowess, the

substantial amount of spatial rifts in the area would greatly increase their chances of surviving.

# Chapter 275: Supernatural Healing Ability!

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After parting ways with Shi Qing, Nie Tian sped off like an arrow shot from a bow.

While dashing at full speed, he growled through his teeth, “Li Langfeng!”

There had never been a person who had been able to inflict so much damage on him.

As he ran, he could still feel the destructive force Li Langfeng had left in him rampaging inside him, damaging his flesh and blood.

With every step he took, he experienced bone-piercing agony.

It felt as if there was a violent python slithering throughout his body, snapping every meridian it came across.

The excruciating pain kept him incomparably clear-headed.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

As Nie Tian heard a series of rapid, vigorous heartbeats coming from his own chest, he realized that the excessive damage to his body had finally stimulated the bloodline in his heart.

Immediately afterwards, the strong green aura that had been



coiled in his heart rushed out with a unstoppable momentum.

As it did, a vigorous life force rapidly filled his entire body.

While dashing nonstop, Nie Tian had a feeling that, like a fierce monster that had broken free from hell, the green aura was rushing through his meridians towards the dark-green energy that Li Langfeng had left inside of him.

The two forces met around Nie Tian's abdomen.

The green aura was wreathed in a layer of green mist, while its inside was filled with delicate crystal-like chains; inside the crystal-like chains were numerous sparkling, green, bright spots where the profound truths of the life bloodline lay.

At that moment, the crystal-like chains that constituted the green aura suddenly began to shine brightly like torches.

Like a brutal dragon, the green aura madly bit fought the force that Li Langfeng had left inside Nie Tian's body.

The thread of dark-green energy couldn't even put up a fight, and was almost instantly ripped to shreds.

A major proportion of the shredded dark-green energy was gradually absorbed by the green aura and rapidly disappeared.

A small proportion, which was toxic, was extracted and expelled out of Nie Tian's body by the green aura.

Each and every pore around Nie Tian's waist suddenly opened up, and bits of dark-green, gooey liquid slowly flowed out through them, like snake venom.

Just like that, the destructive force that had been rampaging within Nie Tian's body for quite some time was annihilated the moment the green aura rushed out of Nie Tian's heart.

The green aura didn't return to Nie Tian's heart immediately after finishing its task. Rather, it roamed about in his body.

Soon, it traced the path the dark-green force had taken to invade Nie Tian's body and traveled towards his right arm. As it did, countless tiny, green spots seeped out of the crystal-like chains within it and dispersed into Nie Tian's meridians, and then his flesh and bones.

Every green spot was branded with profound truths of life, and carried incomparably pure life power.

One ruptured meridian after another was infused with the rich life power and rapidly healed the moment they came into contact with the tiny green spots.

Even Nie Tian's broken bones began to heal under the influence of the mysterious power within the tiny green spots.

Wherever the green aura went, pain was immediately lifted as his meridians and bones were nourished by the the miraculous life power.

Just like that, the green aura gradually swam from Nie Tian's waist up to his right hand, following his meridians. As it did, its misty aura of life was unleashed, healing every damaged meridian and bone to a great extent.

Immediately afterwards, the green aura returned to Nie Tian's heart at the speed of lightning.

It was also at that time that his pounding heart settled down, and he couldn't feel even the slightest pain in him.

After realizing that he was almost fully healed of such heavy injuries within such a short time, Nie Tian's eyes were filled with disbelief.

Even though he still needed to spend some time to recover, as long as he could channel some more flesh essence into his body, he would soon recover completely, and he wouldn't need to worry about any consequences.

He even had a feeling that his meridians and bones would become stronger and more resilient after being magically healed by the green aura.

“Bloodline power...” He struggled to calm himself after discovering another miraculous effect of his bloodline power.

Carrying Pei Qiqi on his back, Nie Tian continued to dash at full speed into a desolate area of the mountain range, heading towards the region where numerous spatial rifts were slithering in midair.

Fearing that Li Langfeng would catch up to him, Nie Tian wished that Pei Qiqi could recover her strength soon, so that she could use her spatial magics to hold him off.

“How is she doing?” Before, Nie Tian’s injuries had pained him to the point where he almost wanted to die, so he hadn’t thought of the girl on his back until now.

Now that the pain had been eliminated by the green aura, he finally started to pay attention to Pei Qiqi.

That was when he suddenly felt Pei Qiqi’s ample chest pressing against his back.

With every step he took as he charged madly forward, he could feel the fullness of her breasts.

Relieved of pain, he couldn’t help but get carried away by his thoughts as he was repeatedly stuck by this wonderful sensation.

Then, he turned his head to check on Pei Qiqi, and he discovered that her head was sagged against his left shoulder with her eyes

closed, as if she had passed out long ago.

Her delicate face that used to be as beautiful as a picture was now pale and completely devoid of its ruddy radiance.

The only redness on her face was the dried trail of blood that ran down the corner of her mouth.

Only at that moment did Nie Tian realize that the blood from Pei Qiqi's mouth had already painted his left shoulder red.

After taking a brief glance at it, Nie Tian retracted his gaze and continued to run as fast as he could.

However, he couldn't get Pei Qiqi's poor look out of his head; the picture of her blood-stained lips had been branded in his mind.

"Why in the world did she come back?" Nie Tian wracked his brain, but couldn't find an answer.

If Pei Qiqi hadn't returned, then just relying on just the two of them, he and Shi Qing wouldn't have had a chance against the vicious Li Langfeng.

After witnessing Li Langfeng's formidable strength and terrifying resilience, Nie Tian even doubted that he could kill this man with the Flame Dragon Armor's help.

To begin with, Pei Qiqi had spent a significant amount of strength to shut down and then dismantle the Dark Moon's teleportation portal in the Dark Moon's base.

When she had come back to the valley after leaving with Li Langfeng's consent, she had over-consumed her power and pushed her limits to forcibly alter the spatial rifts' track.

Then, she had sustained a series of severe injuries and almost died during their battle against Li Langfeng.

With those thoughts in mind, Nie Tian used one of his Heaven Eyes to examine Pei Qiqi's injuries, and to his surprise, found that even though she was seriously injured, her entire body was enveloped by a mysterious ward of spatial energy, stopping his Heaven Eyes from prying into her injuries.

Therefore, Nie Tian commanded the Heaven Eye to rise up into the air to join the other Heaven Eyes in carefully scanning the vicinity for signs of life, lest they run into Qi warriors who were on exploration trips in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

After all, he was also in a bad state to fight. It was preferable for them to avoid battles as much as they could.

He had more than once witnessed the fierceness and cold-bloodedness of the Qi warriors who wandered in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. If anyone who wasn't a Blood Skull member were to encounter him and see Pei Qiqi on his back in their current state, they would probably launch attacks without any hesitation.

Therefore, Nie Tian exerted all his power to run while using his Heaven Eyes to scan his surroundings.

He had already lost track of time.

Even though he was on the verge of draining his last remaining strength, he didn't dare to stop due to the tremendous threat from Li Langfeng.

A very long time passed...

Nie Tian was still running like a mad bull, so he didn't notice when Pei Qiqi's closed eyelids twitched a bit before they opened.

Jolting nonstop on Nie Tian's back, Pei Qiqi seemed rather bewildered as her beautiful eyes rolled around to examine her surroundings.

Agonized by the splitting pain all over her, she bit hard on her lips to stop herself from screaming.

It wasn't long before she realized what had happened. Looking at the panting Nie Tian, who was still running at full speed, a hint of redness slowly surfaced on her ghastly cheeks.

Only then did she realize that she had her whole body pressed against Nie Tian's mountain-like broad back, and her arms were

naturally wrapped around Nie Tian's neck in a rather intimate fashion.

Nie Tian, on the other hand, was using his hands to clench her thighs tightly to his waist, so that she wouldn't fall while he was dashing forward.

She couldn't help but bite her lips harder as a hint of shyness appeared in her eyes, as if she was wondering whether or not she should tell Nie Tian that she had already awoken.



# Chapter 276: Dashing with A Beauty on His Back

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Pei Qiqi didn't make any rash moves. Instead, she circulated the power within her spiritual sea to examine herself.

She discovered that, after their battle against Li Langfeng, she had consumed almost all the power in her dantian's spiritual sea.

Not only that, she had also suffered unprecedentedly serious injuries.

As a matter of fact, she had only clashed with Li Langfeng twice.

The first time had been when she had commanded two of her Ethereal Swords to pierce into Li Langfeng's spirit beast skull. The strong backlash attack from the skull had inflicted serious damage to her internal organs.

The second clash happened when she had used her last remaining spiritual power to contend with Li Langfeng's dark-green light beams and toxic smoke, which dealt another great blow to her already-injured body.

If Nie Tian hadn't charged towards Li Langfeng and bombarded him relentlessly with his most explosive technique, causing him to fly backwards dozens of meters, she would have undoubtedly died under Li Langfeng's fierce attacks.

At this time, she attempted to move and retract her arms, which were currently wrapped around Nie Tian's neck, so that she could press her hands against Nie Tian's broad back, putting space between her chest and Nie Tian's back.

Her slender eyebrows furrowed as a pained expression could be seen at the corner of her blood-stained mouth.

Even the mere movement of her arms triggered her injuries and caused her to experience heart-wrenching pain.

Then, she realized that if she had put her hands between her and Nie Tian despite the pain, she would have to fight against the continuous impact from the jolting as Nie Tian dashed forward.

As slight as the impact would be, considering her current condition, she might not be able to take it.

The wisest choice would be to maintain her current position and relax her body, so that she wouldn't put her heavily injured body under more stress.

During this period of time, she could take her time to summon her strength to adjust her breathing and stabilize her condition.

Pursing her lips, Pei Qiqi reluctantly decided not to tell Nie Tian that she had already awoken.

She kept her original position and quietly gathered her spiritual

power as she narrowed her eyes and looked at Nie Tian with a measuring gaze.

Since her face was very close to Nie Tian's, she could see sweat dripping down Nie Tian's cheek and hear his heavy panting.

Since their bodies were stuck together, she could not only feel the sturdiness and broadness of Nie Tian's back, but also Nie Tian's warmth.

The Nie Tian she saw at this moment was calm and determined; not the least bit of panic could be seen in his eyes. He would occasionally frown as he seemed to be sensing something before he rapidly made a decision and altered the path he moved in.

For some reason, looking at Nie Tian, she wasn't afraid at all, even though she knew that Li Langfeng could show up at any corner.

Eyebrows furrowed, she recalled the battle between Nie Tian and Li Langfeng and a pondering look appearing in her bright eyes.

The reason she had returned to help Nie Tian and Shi Qing was two-fold.

For one, Hua Mu had put Nie Tian in her hands, and Hua Mu had a close relationship with her master.

She had promised Hua Mu that she would take care of Nie Tian,

so she definitely couldn't return Nie Tian's dead body to Hua Mu when he came back for him.

For another, Nie Tian had showed up and rescued her and Cai Yuan when they had been surrounded by Ma Jiu and his men and they were just about to use up their strength.

If it hadn't been for Nie Tian, who had assassinated the Dark Moon members Ma Jiu had deployed at the perimeter of the valley, both she and Cai Yuan would have died beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Therefore, she had decided to come back and fight side by side with Nie Tian and Shi Qing, even though she had every reason to save herself.

“Hua Tian...”

Confusion filling her eyes, she fixed her gaze on Nie Tian, but couldn't see through him, just as Nie Tian couldn't see through her via his Heaven Eyes.

The decisiveness and shocking strength Nie Tian had displayed at the moment of life or death undoubtedly surpassed that of a normal early Heaven stage Qi warrior.

In her eyes, Nie Tian seemed to be veiled by a layer of mystery, under which numerous secrets were hiding.

At that moment, Nie Tian suddenly came to a stop.

Via his Heaven Eyes, he had detected signs of life in the region in front of him, which had been his destination.

Nie Tian had originally thought that since the region was filled with active spatial rifts, Pei Qiqi would be able to display her advantage to the fullest.

Hence, if Li Langfeng showed up after they entered that area, Pei Qiqi would be able to contend with him using her profound spatial magics.

What he didn't know was that Pei Qiqi's injuries were so severe that she wouldn't be able to recover her battle prowess within a short time.

Pei Qiqi seemed to have noticed Nie Tian's hesitation.

Then, she, who had remained silent the entire time, suddenly made an extremely soft sound.

Since her mouth and nose were very close to Nie Tian's ears, he heard her instantly.

Without turning his head, Nie Tian asked with a smile on his face, "Are you awake?"

“Yeah,” Pei Qiqi replied softly. Despite her injuries and pain, she retracted her arms from Nie Tian’s neck and used them to support herself, so that a distance was put between her full chest and Nie Tian’s back. “What’s the situation now?”

As she spoke, her ring of holding shone with shimmering light.

In the next moment, a few medicinal pills flew out from within the ring, and she swallowed them without any delay.

A bitter expression could be seen at the corner of Nie Tian’s mouth as he said, “I’m taking you away from Li Langfeng. Even though he also sustained heavy injuries, they were nothing he couldn’t fix in a short period of time. Since I don’t know if he will pursue and attack us after he’s fully recovered, I can only do my best to run away. Once he catches up to us, we’ll both die at his hands.”

“So why did you stop?” Pei Qiqi asked softly.

“Look.” Nie Tian pointed at the spatial rift-filled region. “I know you’ll be able to display your strength to the fullest in that region, but I sensed the life auras of a handful of cultivators in there. Considering our current condition, I’m not totally confident that we’ll be able to wipe them out. However, if we don’t go there, we’ll have to risk being caught by Li Langfeng, which will also lead us to our doom. That’s why I was hesitant.”

“There, you say?” Pei Qiqi followed Nie Tian’s gaze, and immediately asked with a surprised tone, “You can detect signs of

life from such a distance away?”

The region Nie Tian pointed at was quite far from where he was standing. As far as Pei Qiqi knew, even Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors might not be able to obtain a clear grasp of the situation from a location so far away.

The fact that Nie Tian could do it greatly amazed her, and made her feel that Nie Tian was becoming increasingly unfathomable.

“Yeah, I have my own methods.” Nie Tian answered.

Pei Qiqi pondered for a moment and said, “Okay, from now on, I’ll tell you where to go. You just need to follow my instructions.”

“Alright.” Nie Tian answered crisply.

“We’re not going to that spatial rift-filled region.” Pei Qiqi rapidly made up her mind. She raised one hand with great difficulty and pointed out a new direction for Nie Tian. “Let’s go that way.”

She didn’t tell Nie Tian how bad her condition was, and that even if they had gone to the spatial rift-filled region, she wouldn’t have been able to put up a fight.

The region she had pointed out was secluded and not often visited by explorers. With a little luck, they wouldn’t run into any spirit beasts or hostile Qi warriors.

Upon seeing the new direction Pei Qiqi had given him, Nie Tian didn't ask for a reason. Instead, he once again dashed off at full speed.

As soon as he did, the violent jolting increased the pressure on Pei Qiqi's arms, which she had used to separate her upper body from Nie Tian's back.

She immediately experienced severe pain in both her elbows. It was so painful that it even significantly brought down the efficiency of the process of her gathering spiritual power.

As she gritted her white, shell-like teeth, a hint of redness once again appeared on her cheeks. Then, she had no other choice but lower herself on Nie Tian's back and circle her arms around Nie Tian's neck again.

Even though this position embarrassed her very much, it was the most strength-saving and relaxing for her.

Only in this position could she slowly channel her spiritual power to stabilize her condition and refine the medicinal pills she had just consumed to heal her injuries from the inside.

The moment she lowered her body, the bolting Nie Tian realized it.

The fullness and firmness he sensed from his back made his heart



skip a beat. Pei Qiqi's chin was placed on Nie Tian's shoulder, and her breaths carried an orchid scent. Nie Tian couldn't help but feel mesmerized.

However, Nie Tian knew that they were still in a dangerous situation. Therefore, he didn't dare to let his mind drift away. He even drew power from the fragmentary stars in his soul to resist Pei Qiqi's charm and remain clear-headed.

At that very moment, Pei Qiqi was silently examining him with wide eyes.

As soon as she had lowered her upper body on Nie Tian's back, she had felt Nie Tian's body suddenly tighten as his breaths became more rapid and heavy. Even his heartbeat began to accelerate.

Furthermore, she saw Nie Tian's eyebrows furrow before they gradually straightened.

That was when she realized that their intimate position had created huge waves in Nie Tian's heart. Since the two of them were so close together, no matter how hard Nie Tian tried to suppress his feelings, she could see them with great clarity.

The tip of Pei Qiqi's eyebrow twitched as she stared at Nie Tian's cheek from the side. Watching him pretending to be calm, she cursed in her heart, "Asshole!"

# Chapter 277: Secret Stronghold Under the Creek

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At dusk, when they reached the foot of an unknown mountain, Pei Qiqi said to Nie Tian, “This is it.”

Upon hearing her instruction, Nie Tian immediately stopped his dashing momentum.

He had been running untiringly since he had parted ways with Shi Qing. At this moment, he was on the verge of burning out the last bit of his spiritual power in his spiritual sea.

Even if Pei Qiqi hadn’t instructed him to stop, he would have had to ask for a time-out and find a place to recuperate.

Pei Qiqi’s words happened to coincide with his intent.

A creek was running at the foot of the mountain. The water was so clear that the stones at the bottom of the creek could be seen.

In this area, the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth was rather faint, and there weren’t any spatial rifts. Everything was still and quiet.

Nie Tian used his Heaven Eyes to scan the area, and didn’t discover any signs of life. This area was rather similar to the place where he had gathered and cultivated star power, which had been

fully explored and wasn't often visited by cultivators.

Pei Qiqi took a deep breath and pointed her slender finger towards a location in the creek as she explained to Nie Tian, "This is the place. Put away your jade bracelet as we sink into the water. Take your time to descend to the bottom. There's a secret Blood Skull stronghold under the creek. Once we're in, we'll be safe for a while. Even Li Langfeng won't be able to find us."

Nie Tian's eyes suddenly lit up.

He remembered earlier that when he, Pei Qiqi, and Cai Yuan were running away from Ma Jiu and his men, Cai Yuan had led them to one of the Blood Skull's secret stone rooms somewhere in the mountain range.

That stone room had been sealed off from the outside world by a special ward that only Qi warriors at the Worldly realm or higher would be able to detect. Furthermore, there was a spell formation that had allowed Cai Yuan to communicate with his friends at the Blood Skull's base.

Since the Blood Skull had explored and garrisoned the Void Illusion Mountain Range for a long time, they had set up secret strongholds like this in every region of the mountain range. However, as far as Nie Tian knew, their locations weren't even revealed to common members of the Blood Skull.

This was because once their locations were exposed to their enemies, the Blood Skull would definitely suffer a great loss.

Just like Nie Tian, Pei Qiqi was also only a guest elder of the Blood Skull, which didn't even make her a formal member.

That meant she shouldn't have the clearance to know the locations of the secret strongholds the Blood Skull had set up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Pei Qiqi seemed to have seen through Nie Tian's confusion. She raised herself up with her hands and straightened her upper body with great difficulty before explaining, "Cai Yuan shared a lot of the Blood Skull's confidential information with me even though I didn't want to know. I originally thought that I would never get a chance to use one of their secret strongholds in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

"As a matter of fact, I've explored the mountain range for years, and not once have I used one of their secret strongholds. I've never been injured as badly as I am now.

"Also, we don't know if Li Langfeng will come after us. I can only make an exception this time."

Nie Tian grinned. "Wow, Lord Cai is indeed a man who's true to his feelings."

As the young lord of the Blood Skull, by telling Pei Qiqi, an outsider, the locations of their secret strongholds, Cai Yuan had obviously broken their rules.

However, Nie Tian had long since noticed that Cai Yuan had deep feelings for Pei Qiqi, so it was understandable for him to break the rules for the girl of his heart.

Nie Tian's teasing tone made Pei Qiqi's face drop. "You think I'm using him?"

"No no, you're reading too much into my words," Nie Tian replied hurriedly.

"It's exactly what you're thinking!"

"No, it's not! Seriously!"

"Then why are you laughing?"

"Umm, I just think Cai Yuan is a good guy."

"A good guy?" Pei Qiqi pondered in silence for a while before nodding and saying, "Yeah, perhaps. He has indeed been good to me. But make no mistake, Cai Yuan isn't foolish. I've done a lot for the Blood Skull too. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't have cared less if Cai Yue died in that mountain valley."

"...I'm going down now." Nie Tian didn't reply directly. Instead, he warned Pei Qiqi, then stepped into the creek and headed towards the location she had pointed out to him.

As soon as they were both underwater, he put away his jade bracelet.

Pei Qiqi's garments were made of light fabrics. The moment she was submerged in the creek, it seemed as if she wasn't wearing anything.

Even though she had used her hands to separate her upper body from Nie Tian's back, her thighs and lower abdomen were still sticking closely to Nie Tian's waist.

She could clearly feel that the feeling of her skin against his had given rise to ripples in Nie Tian's heart, and his mind had begun to wander.

Without her jade bracelet to protect her, Pei Qiqi was also holding her breath under the water. Cheeks bulging and eyes filled with anger, she stared at Nie Tian from behind.

It was at that moment Nie Tian's feet touched the bottom of the creek. He looked down and found that there was a smooth, stone plate under his feet.

A medallion that was similar to Nie Tian's guest elder identity medallion flew out of Pei Qiqi's ring of holding.

A cluster of precious light emerged from within the medallion, and a scarlet Blood Skull pattern could be seen within the

shimmering light.

In the next moment, the cluster of light shot into the smooth, stone plate.

CRACKLE! CRACKLE!

The stone cracked, and an opening appeared, over which there was a spiritual power ward that seemed to be keeping the creek water from entering. As soon as the cluster of light, with a Blood Skull pattern within it, made contact with the ward, a secret spell formation seemed to have been triggered.

Pei Qiqi gently patted Nie Tian's shoulder, signaling him that they were good to go.

Immediately afterwards, Nie Tian descended towards the spiritual power ward.

As Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi went through the waterproof ward, they didn't encounter the slightest obstruction, and fell into the secret stronghold of the Blood Skull.

The moment they were through, the spell formation within the spiritual power ward seemed to be deactivated, and the split stone plate closed up. Not a single fissure could be seen in it, as if it had been completely healed.

If someone were to look at it from the bank of the creek, they

wouldn't be able to see anything special about it.

There was a spacious stone room under the creek. The walls of the room were inlaid with luminous pearls and jades, lighting the entire room so brightly that it was as if it was under daylight.

A spell formation that was much more complicated than a Sound Stone was sitting in a corner of the stone room.

While Nie Tian was glancing around, Pei Qiqi said to him weakly, "You can put me down now."

Only then did Nie Tian snap out of his thoughts and put Pei Qiqi down. "Oh, sure."

Soaking wet, Pei Qiqi's silky garments were stuck to her skin, emphasizing her slender, curvaceous physique.

At that moment, her unearthly beautiful face seemed somewhat pale, making her look less cold and domineering than usual, but more delicate and fragile.

Adding in her perfectly proportioned body, one could only describe her as a god's work. With only one glance at her, Nie Tian couldn't bear to remove his gaze from her.

"See something you like?" Pei Qiqi's cold voice rang out. Her voice was filled with anger, as if she had squeezed the words through gritted teeth. If not for the fact that she couldn't fight, she



would probably teach Nie Tian a lesson without any hesitation.

Nie Tian's mind was still drifting, and he didn't notice the anger in Pei Qiqi's voice. He nodded subconsciously, and gave voice to his thoughts, "Nice, perfect... My whole life I've never seen a girl as beautiful as you. No wonder Lord Cai likes you. If it were me..."

Nie Tian suddenly sensed the murderous aura in Pei Qiqi's voice and snapped back to reality.

He immediately turned his head and averted his eyes from Pei Qiqi's desirable body. He pretended to check out the layout of the stone room as he said, "You and I both need to spend some time to recover our strength. Let's get to it then."

With these words, he distanced himself from Pei Qiqi before she could lash out at him again, and sat down in a corner of the stone room.

"Shameless!" Pei Qiqi said coldly.

Nie Tian, however, pretended that he didn't hear her. He took out a spirit stone, shut his eyes, and began to adjust his breathing.

"Turn your face away!" Pei Qiqi shouted.

"Why?" Nie Tian asked with a puzzled expression.

“I need to change.” Pei Qiqi’s voice was filled with rage.

Perhaps because the two of them were safe for the time being, she discovered that it was hard for her to hold her emotions back when they were the only ones in the stone room.

She couldn’t help but recall the image of her lying on Nie Tian’s back and her body pressing against Nie Tian’s while he dashed at full speed.

Every time she thought of it, anger started to brew in her heart, and she would have to fight her desire to lash out at Nie Tian.

“Oh, okay.” Only after shooting another sneaky glance towards Pei Qiqi, did Nie Tian rapidly turn around to face the hard stone wall, images rising in his mind.

No matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t get the image of Pei Qiqi taking off her wet garments and covering her naked body with dry garments out of his head.

“What are you thinking?” Pei Qiqi asked coldly.

“N-nothing.” Nie Tian hastily replied, afraid of what was going on in his mind being found out.

“Stop thinking it!”

“Okay, sure!”

Nie Tian’s clumsy reply resulted in him exposing himself, making it obvious that he had been picturing Pei Qiqi’s naked body in his mind.

Hearing his words, Pei Qiqi fumed with anger.

She clenched her jaw and glared at Nie Tian from behind. Remembering the embarrassing position of her lying on his back, she grew increasingly mad.

She took a few deep breaths to adjust her state of mind.

WHOOSH!

A tunic-like, ocean-blue battle garment flew out of her ring of holding.

When she took off her wet garments, she experienced severe pain in her shoulder and elbow joints. Even the mere movement of changing garments made her suffer greatly. Soon, her forehead was covered in sweat.

“Are you done?” Nie Tian asked.

“No!”

“Oh...”

# Chapter 278: Misunderstanding

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Nie Tian didn't turn around.

Instead, he faced the stone wall and gradually sank into his inner world, holding a handful of spirit stones.

He had consumed almost all of his spiritual power and sustained heavy injuries during his battle against Li Langfeng, so he needed to recuperate as soon as possible.

One spirit stone after another was rapidly drained of its power and reduced to a normal stone.

In the meantime, his spiritual power was gradually restored.

It wasn't very long before his spiritual sea was restored to twenty percent full, and that was when he stopped cultivating and opened his eyes.

It had been quite a while since he had sensed any movement from Pei Qiqi.

As he turned around to put his back against the ice-cold stone wall, he shot a glance at the girl.

Wearing shot, blue battle garments that were exactly the same with the ones she wore before, Pei Qiqi was also sitting with her

back against the stone wall, recovering her strength with spirit stones.

Bathed in the precious light from the numerous pearls in the wall, Pei Qiqi's skin seemed translucent and sparkling, as if she was made of jade. Her exceptionally long eyelashes were covering her eyes like two fans.

Sitting there completely still, she looked like an unearthly, beautiful female immortal from a painting.

A layer of strange spatial energy was rippling around her. Because of its existence, even though Pei Qiqi was right in front of Nie Tian's eyes, he had a feeling that they were separated by infinite space, which made her seem even more ethereal and unreal.

Then, Nie Tian closed his eyes and used his psychic awareness to examine her.

However, when his psychic awareness reached where Pei Qiqi was sitting, all it could see was empty ground where not even the slightest sign of life could be detected.

"Strange woman," Nie Tian whispered to himself, sighing over the fact that Pei Qiqi was different from everyone else he had met.

A while passed...

Nie Tian took out a giant piece of Golden Stone Rhino meat from his bracelet of holding. Then, he built a fire with a Flame Crystal and cooked the meat with a thin sword.

The injuries to his fleshy body would heal faster if he nourished himself with the rich essence of flesh and blood.

The reason why he had awoken after restoring merely twenty percent of his spiritual power was because he intended to use the rich flesh power within the meat of the fourth grade spirit beast to boost his healing process.

Moments later, the considerable piece of meat was cooked yellow and dripping fat.

Although the Golden Stone Rhino meat was bitter and hard to chew, Nie Tian didn't eat it for its taste.

Within a very short time, he tore up and wolfed down the meat that weighed several dozen kilograms.

Afterwards, he took out a large canteen of water and drank a few gulps.

"It's about enough." He mumbled as he prepared to put away the thin sword, sit back in his original place, and continue to recuperate with spirit stones.

That was when he noticed that Pei Qiqi had already awoken and

was staring at him at this moment, her eyes filled with curiosity.

“Were you eating the Golden Stone Rhino’s meat?” Pei Qiqi asked.

It was Pei Qiqi who had slaughtered the Golden Stone Rhino, but she had only taken its horn and skin, and left what remained of its body to Nie Tian.

Back then, she had thought that it was meaningless for Nie Tian to ask for it.

After all, all the living spirit beasts in the Realm of Split Void had undergone mutations so that they could survive the poisonous spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

Although those spirit beasts became stronger after their mutation, their flesh and blood were tainted and carried all sorts of impurities and toxins.

At the beginning, some Qi warriors in the Realm of Split Void had tried consuming and using those spirit beasts’ meat to temper and refine their physical bodies.

However, almost all of them had failed. Even though a handful of them had successfully absorbed power from the meat, they had to spend even more power to rid themselves of the toxins.

Since then, everyone had treated the meat of the spirit beasts in



the Realm of Split Void as garbage.

However, the meat Nie Tian had just consumed was none other than the Golden Stone Rhino's meat.

Furthermore, from the poised look on his face, it seemed that it wasn't his first time eating it.

Pei Qiqi also knew that Li Langfeng had been cultivating with the tainted spiritual Qi in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. As he extracted the green toxins from the spiritual Qi, he also couldn't avoid being corroded by the other foreign impurities.

The reason why Li Langfeng coughed all day long and looked like a man who was being tortured by a fatal disease was that those impurities and toxins were piling up inside of him.

While he was building up his battle prowess and improving his cultivation base, he was actually damaging his own health.

Pei Qiqi despised Li Langfeng's way of cultivation, which was obtaining strength at the cost of his own longevity.

She was aware that Li Langfeng had a sworn enemy, and he only cultivated so relentlessly so that he could acquire enough strength to kill that person.

But why did Nie Tian adopt such a cultivation method?

The moment she saw Nie Tian eat the Golden Stone Rhino's meat, she sorted Nie Tian as another lunatic.

"No wonder he possesses such monstrous strength while he's only at the Heaven stage. He's just like Li Langfeng." Pei Qiqi assumed that she had finally found a rational explanation for Nie Tian's uniqueness.

Then, she began to sympathize with Nie Tian for having a sworn enemy at such a young age and building his strength at the expense of his own longevity just to have his revenge.

In her eyes, if that was the case, no matter how strong Nie Tian was, it wouldn't mean anything.

Sooner or later, he would suffer from the backlash and die in the prime of his life.

"Yes, it was the Golden Stone Rhino's meat." Nie Tian answered without much thought.

Pei Qiqi had already reached a conclusion as to why Nie Tian did it, so she didn't feel the necessity to ask if he could process the impurities and toxins within the Golden Stone Rhino's meat.

She also didn't want to bring up painful memories for Nie Tian by asking about it.

“I’m hungry too,” she blurted.

Nie Tian went blank for a moment before saying, “You can’t eat the Golden Stone Rhino’s meat. You won’t be able to process it.”

“Of course, I know.” Pei Qiqi felt that Nie Tian’s reply confirmed her assumption. Believing she had figured out Nie Tian’s situation, she was no longer cranky towards Nie Tian. She took out a piece of meat from within her ring of holding and tossed it to Nie Tian, ordering, “Roast it for me.”

“Alright.” Nie Tian took out another Flame Crystal and used it cook the meat Pei Qiqi had tossed him.

Moments later, the meat became yellow and greasy, and gave off a delicious smell.

Then, he walked up to Pei Qiqi with the cooked meat on his thin sword.

He handed the meat to her, along with the sword, and said, “Here.”

Pei Qiqi grabbed it and began eating in a graceful fashion. “When will you be able to recover your strength?” she asked as she ate.

“I probably need one to two days to recover all the spiritual power I’ve spent.” With these words, Nie Tian pondered for a moment, then continued, “As for the injuries to my body, they

might take longer to recover. Li Langfeng sent his toxic, corrosive power through my arm into my internal organs. It nearly killed me.”

Pei Qiqi was astonished. “His toxic, corrosive power entered your body?!”

Nie Tian nodded unwittingly.

“Freak!” Pei Qiqi’s expression flickered, since she was no stranger to Li Langfeng’s bizarre, poisonous attacking skills.

She had witnessed quite a few Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors die after having their flesh corroded by Li Langfeng’s poisonous attacks.

The Spirit God Sect from the Realm of Dark Underworld was known for their use of poison and toxins, which were usually beyond cure.

Even though he was suffering a backlash himself, Li Langfeng was among their most skilled and ruthless experts.

It was unbelievable that Nie Tian was still alive after being infused with Li Langfeng’s toxic power.

However, Pei Qiqi suddenly realized that Nie Tian had picked the same path as Li Langfeng, so she thought it through.

She frowned as she stated her situation, “I’ll need five to six days to restore my spiritual power, and another two weeks to heal my physical injuries. During this period, we’ll stay in this stronghold, and we won’t try to contact the Blood Skull.”

“Why?” Nie Tian took a glance at the spell formation which they could use to seek help from the Blood Skull.

“I don’t want to see anyone before I’m fully recovered,” Pei Qiqi answered coldly.

“Alright.” Nie Tian didn’t say another word, but sat back down and started to recover his strength with spirit stones again.

At that moment, the Golden Stone Rhino’s meat he had consumed was gradually digested and began to unleash flesh power.

At first, he was somewhat worried.

He was afraid that the green aura in his heart would swoop out and savagely devour all the flesh power, just like how it had rushed out of Nie Tian’s heart and torn the energy Li Langfeng had left in him to shreds.

Furthermore, the green aura had somehow healed his ruptured meridians and broken bones. It must have consumed a substantial amount of energy to display such a magical bloodline power.

Therefore, it wouldn't surprise him if the green aura suddenly appeared and predominantly harvested all the flesh power the Golden Stone Rhino's meat had generated.

However, it remained calm.

More and more wisps of flesh power rose from his abdomen and naturally flowed towards the parts of him that had sustained the most severe injuries.

He could sense with great clarity that the injuries inside him were healing at a noticeable speed.

# Chapter 279: Strange Fluctuations

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In the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

Li Langfeng was coughing violently, making him look even skinnier and paler than before.

Every time he coughed, he would spit out a mouthful of filth, which was filled with gooey impurities of different colors.

Seven corpses were lying on the ground under a handful of spatial rifts. From the way they were dressed, they were all from another force in the Realm of Split Void, the Wild Fire.

All seven of them had died at his hands.

Standing amongst the dead bodies, face ghastly and gruesome, Li Langfeng used his psychic awareness to scan the vicinity.

As as Nie Tian and Shi Qing had expected, after spending a short while to recover his battle prowess in the valley, Li Langfeng had chased after them, his primary target having been Nie Tian.

The dark-green energy he had left inside Nie Tian had allowed him to chase him to this location, where he had suddenly lost track of the energy.

What he didn't know was that this was the place where the

frenzied green aura in Nie Tian's heart had rushed out and devoured his toxic energy.

As the energy was destroyed, he was no longer able to detect Nie Tian's location.

The reason why he had killed the seven Wild Fire Qi warriors was because he hadn't been able to press them to give him the whereabouts of Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi.

"They must have headed towards a place where spatial rifts were the most active!" After a quick scan of his surroundings, Li Langfeng rapidly made his decision and floated forward like a ghost roaming the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Several hours passed...

He arrived at the location where Nie Tian had stopped and wondered which direction they had gone, the one where spatial rifts were numerous and active, or the one which was secluded and rarely visited by people.

Without pausing for a moment, Li Langfeng dashed in the direction where numerous spatial rifts were slithering in the air.

At this point, he finally began to charge in the opposite direction as Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi...

After Shi Qing had parted ways with Nie Tian at the mouth of the



mountain valley, he had run at lightning speed in the direction that the other Blood Skull members had left in to chase after the Dark Moon deserters.

As he had hastened on with his journey, he had taken out his Sound Stone from time to time and tried to get in contact with Blood Skull members in the vicinity.

However, the path he had taken was none other than the one Li Langfeng had taken to get to the valley.

In order to get a full understanding of what had happened in the Dark Moon's base, Li Langfeng had interrogated and slaughtered every Blood Skull member he had found in that area.

Even though Shi Qing hadn't been able to discover any Blood Skull members following this path, he found Cai Yue via his Sound Stone after marching for a long time.

It wasn't long before the two of them met in a location where numerous jagged rocks stood in grotesque shapes.

"Uncle Shi!" Shi Qing's appearance overjoyed Cai Yue, who was originally burning with anxiety.

Ever since Cai Yue had left the mountain valley, she had been attempting to get in contact with any Blood Skull members via her Sound Stone, hoping to find Gu Yu and Cai Yuan and lead them back to the valley as soon as possible to kill Li Langfeng.

However, her unceasing efforts had proven to be fruitless, and she had just been worrying about Shi Qing's safety.

Shi Qing's sudden appearance put Cai Yue's heart at ease. She asked, "How did you escape, Uncle Shi? What happened to that poisonous man?"

Shi Qing, who was covered in blood and looked extremely ghastly, also let out a sigh of relief after seeing Cai Yue unscathed.

The reason he had tricked Cai Yue into leaving was because he had known that she wouldn't be able to help them.

He had anticipated that Li Langfeng would have killed all the Blood Skull members around the mountain valley, and the other Blood Skull members that had been chasing after Dark Moon deserters wouldn't return within a short time.

Therefore, the only way to make sure Cai Yue stayed safe had been to send her away.

Furthermore, that reason why he had picked this direction after he had parted ways with Nie Tian was because he was worried that Cai Yue would run into villains while traveling in the Void Illusion Mountain Range by herself.

Now that Cai Yue was standing in front of him, unscathed, Shi Qing said with a relieved tone, "Li Langfeng probably went after

Hua Tian.”

“Hua Tian?” Cai Yue went blank for a moment before she asked with knit eyebrows, “Why would he do that? If he wanted to hunt down someone useful, shouldn’t he have gone after Pei Qiqi?”

“Miss Pei sustained heavy injuries, and Hua Tian had to carry her on his back,” Shi Qing explained. “We went our separate ways at the mouth of the mountain valley. The two of them are in the same boat now. I hope they can lose Li Langfeng and survive this calamity. Both of them are talented youngsters. If they are lucky enough to survive Li Langfeng’s pursuit, I suppose both of them will transform and rise to a new level.”

“They’re both talented youngsters?” Cai Yue pursed her lips and said with a disdainful tone, “Perhaps Pei Qiqi can be counted as talented, but that slick Hua Tian is talented too? He didn’t even dare to join the battle when we raided the Dark Moon’s base! The only reason my brother gave him a guest elder’s identity medallion was because he wanted to butter up that bad woman!”

Cai Yuan had never taken Nie Tian seriously. Knowing that Nie Tian was friends with Li Ye and they lived together, she had long since considered Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi to be on the same side and equally as bad.

“That Hua Tian kid is way beyond ordinary. Even I almost misjudged him.” Shi Qing admired Nie Tian from the bottom of his heart.

When he and Pei Qiqi were hanging by a thread, Nie Tian had decisively charged towards Li Langfeng and struck Li Langfeng's spirit beast skull head-on using his most explosive skill.

Shi Qing had taken a strike from Li Langfeng's spirit beast skull. Even though he had been in that petrified state, that powerful strike had almost shattered his rock armor.

Therefore, he knew the might of Li Liangfeng's strike better than anyone else.

However, not only did the clash not kill Nie Tian at that instant, but Li Liangfeng was sent flying backward by the strong impact.

After Li Langfeng had crashed into the ground, he even had to use his secret magic to shield himself with poisonous power and recuperate.

Although Nie Tian had also sustained serious injuries, he had still been able to heft Pei Qiqi onto his back and run out of the valley.

Nie Tian's explosive punch alone had made Shi Qing see his decisiveness and fierceness, and its might had flabbergasted him.

He doubt that he would be able to find another early Heaven stage warrior in the entire Realm of Split Void who dared to fight Li Langfeng head-on.

"I don't understand what special qualities that Hua Tian person

has.” Cai Yue said with a cold snort. “Even you speak so highly of him! I refuse to believe that he’s a capable person!”

Since Shi Qing was badly injured, he didn’t have the time and energy to explain everything to Cai Yue. Hence, he said, “We need to find Gu Yu and the others as soon as possible and inform them of our encounter with Li Langfeng. Considering Hua Tian and Miss Pei’s strength, I’m afraid that they won’t be able to escape from Li Langfeng alone. If it’s possible, we still need to go and rescue them.”

“What? If they die, they die. Why do we have to save them? It’s not like they are members of the Blood Skull. We won’t be responsible for their deaths!” Cai Yue sounded very discontent.

“You don’t understand.” Shi Qing said with a bitter smile. “Miss Pei’s identity is very special. If she really died in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and her master found out she was on a Blood Skull mission, she wouldn’t let us off easily. Not only that, if that happens, I’m afraid that your brother won’t forgive himself either. No matter what, we need to do our best to save them. Even if we fail, we’ll have a clear conscience at least.”

“Okay...” Cai Yue replied, not fully understanding Shi Qing’s words.

The battle between the Dark Moon and the Blood Skull had made such a loud commotion that numerous Qi warriors who roamed the Void Illusion Mountain Range soon learned about it.,

Via those well-informed people, the other major force in the Realm of Split Void, the Wild Fire, also rapidly learned of what had happened.

On top of a two thousand-meter-tall mountain peak...

Grayish brown rocks had been piled into a handful of roughly-made stone houses, which formed the Wild Fire's base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Since this part of the mountain range was bitterly cold and snowed year-round, only powerful Qi warriors were able to survive here.

In front of one of the stone houses.

Fu Heng, the highest commander of the Wild Fire's branch in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, was standing with a fur overcoat on his broad, mountain-like shoulders as his subordinates reported to him.

Freezing wind whizzed by the mountaintop.

After hearing the man's words, Fu Heng grinned and said, "The Blood Skull couldn't have raided the Dark Moon's base for no reason. Either Gu Yu or Ma Jiu must have found something! How can the Wild Fire not be a part of it!"

The forces the Wild Fire, the Blood Skull, and the Dark Moon had

deployed in the Void Illusion Mountain Range were roughly equally strong.

Gu Yu, Ma Jiu, and Fu Heng were all at the late Greater Heaven stage, and had a rather good understanding of one another.

The three of them had reached a mutual understanding that they would exercise restraint, and wouldn't start full-frontal wars with one another unless one of them discovered a brand-new, unexplored spatial rift.

Of course, small scale battles occurred from time to time when their members encountered each other in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

However, those battles were usually under control, and the casualties were normally acceptable.

Once a full-blown war broke out between the three forces, there had to be a serious reason behind it. It was very unlikely that they would wage wars and fight to the last man because of a dispute over trivial things.

Normally speaking, wars of that scale were usually started over unexplored spatial rifts.

At that time, large numbers of powerful experts would descend upon the Void Illusion Mountain Range from the Land of the Abandoned, Shatter City, and Ash City.

Even the heads of the three forces, who were at the Worldly realm, would personally show up in the Void Illusion Mountain Range to secure their significant interests.

From what Fu Heng could tell, since neither the Blood Skull nor the Dark Moon had assembled powerful forces from Shatter City or the Land of the Abandoned, it was unlikely that they had discovered new realms. Rather, it might be some precious treasures they were fighting over.

“Whatever it is, we need to be a part of it. Otherwise, people may think that we’re afraid of them.” Fu Heng rapidly made up his mind, and arranged for his subordinates to gather a troop, which he would lead to the area where the Dark Moon and Blood Skull members were last seen.

At that moment, Nie Tian and Pei Qiqi were still hiding in the secret stone room of the Blood Skull under the nameless creek, completely unaware of the huge waves their operation had caused.

During the past few days, Nie Tian had been consuming the Golden Stone Rhino’s meat and using the rich flesh power it generated to heal the wounds to his body. At the same time, he had been using spirit stones to replenish his spiritual power.

At this point, he had fully restored the substantial amount of spiritual power he had spent during his battle against Li Langfeng, but the injuries to his fleshy body might take more time to fully recover.



Every time he took out and cooked the Golden Stone Rhino's meat, Pei Qiqi would toss him a piece of clean meat she had brought with her without saying a word.

Understanding what she meant, Nie Tian would catch the meat and cook it for her.

When they ate, Pei Qiqi would always eat in small bites and remain silent the entire time.

When they were done eating, they would go back to their cultivation without any communication.

After some time, the two of them seemed to become accustomed to this way of being with each other as they both concentrated on recovering their health and strength, getting ready for what awaited them.

This day, Nie Tian was suddenly awoken from his cultivation by a sobbing sound.

He opened his eyes and discovered that Pei Qiqi's shoulders were trembling, and she was sobbing with her eyes closed, as if she was wallowing in a horrible nightmare.

# Chapter 280: Two People Who Share the Same Misfortune

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Pei Qiqi was sobbing softly.

Nie Tian suddenly became refreshed as he stared blankly at her and listened to the words she was mumbling.

“Mom, dad...” As vague as it was, Nie Tian could hear that Pei Qiqi was calling to her parents like a little girl seeing off her parents who were going on a long journey, begging for them to stay.

At this moment, the usual coldness and fierceness had disappeared from her delicate face. Heart-broken vulnerability was all there was.

Teardrops rolled down her cheeks like a unstrung pearl necklace, adding to her sad beauty.

However, the sobbing didn't last long, and she soon awoke from her dreams.

When she opened her eyes, she immediately noticed Nie Tian's gaze, and immediately hid the helpless sadness on her face.

In the next moment, her expression became as cold as a steel knife again.

However, she couldn't stop her tears from flowing out of the corners of her eyes and rolling down her cheeks.

She took out a handkerchief and rolled her eyes to the side as she silently brushed away her tears.

Apparently, the images were still lingering in her mind and she still needed some time to come out of her dreams.

She could only constantly brush away her tears and try to calm herself.

For some reason, Nie Tian felt heartache watching her like this.

"Your parents... What happened to them?" Nie Qian asked in a soft voice.

"It's none of your business!" Pei Qiqi answered coldly.

Nie Tian fell silent for a short while before letting out a sigh and saying with a bitter expression, "I've never seen my parents."

As soon as he uttered those words, a sense of sadness immediately filled his heart.

His whole life unfurled in front of his eyes.

Pei Qiqi, who had turned her head to the side to avert Nie Tian's eyes, turned back to look at him after hearing his words. Nose flaring and eyelashes trembling, she asked with a tone that was ten times softer than usual, "You're also...?"

"My mother died soon after I was born." Nie Tian said with a chilly tone. "As for my father, I don't even know who he is."

At this moment, Nie Tian was also drowned in sorrow and bitterness.

Pei Qiqi watched Nie Tian quietly, and only after a long time did she say, "Life is always full of misfortunes. As life goes on, there are fewer and fewer people you can share your experiences with. The world is brutal, and the path of seeking strength is endless. If you want to gain something, you will have to be willing to give up some other things.

"For my parents, they chose to give up familial love."

With these words, she closed her eyes and didn't seem to wish to continue.

"Familial love..." Nie Tian mulled over Pei Qiqi's words. Then he nodded and said, his heart filled with bitterness, "Perhaps you're right. What we cherish the most might be the very thing they had to give up."

Nie Tian couldn't help but think of his father, who he had never met and knew nothing of, and wondered why he had left his mother and disappeared.

From the moment his bloodline had awakened, he had realized that his father must not be an ordinary man.

No one in the Nie clan family history had been known to possess the mysterious bloodline power.

The fact that bloodline power ran through Nie Tian's veins meant that he must have inherited it from his father.

A man who possessed such powerful bloodline power should be beyond ordinary, and have the ability to guard his own wife and child.

However, he had never showed up in Nie Tian's life.

Because of that, Nie Tian had been shunned and treated differently by other Nie Clan members his whole life.

No one had taken him as a true member of the Nie Clan, except his grandfather and aunt.

The reason why he had repeatedly fought Nie Hong, Nie Yuan, and other children his age was because he longed for a sense of existence and recognition, and he was eager to prove his worth to the other Nie Clan members

“If I ever find him one day, I’ll demand a clear answer from him!” Nie Tian said to himself with great determination.

Even though he had never said it to anyone, he always knew that he harbored hatred towards his father.

Part of the reason he had pursued his own strength so unrelentingly over the years was that he wanted to be strong enough when he had the chance to question his own father.

As an orphan himself, Nie Tian shared Pei Qiqi’s feelings.

At this moment, Pei Qiqi’s weeping made his hatred towards his father even clearer and more heartfelt.

Only after a long time was he able to calm himself and stop himself from thinking about the fact that his father had abandoned and betrayed him and his mother.

Too upset to concentrate on cultivation, Nie Tian took out another huge chunk of Golden Stone Rhino’s meat, roasted it, and vented his frustration by violently tearing up and chewing on the meat.

A few days passed...

Soon after Nie Tian wolfed down another chunk of Golden Stone

Rhino's meat, wisps of faint smoke rose from his body and bits of a gooey substance flowed out of his open pores.

Every time he ate, he consumed almost fifty kilos of meat, quickly emptying his stock of Golden Stone Rhino meat.

As he consumed and absorbed the flesh power of the last piece of Golden Stone Rhino meat, the injuries caused by Li Langfeng were finally fully healed.

The ruptured meridians were now reconnected and even more resilient than before. The formerly cracked bones were now without the slightest fissure and tougher than they ever were.

As Nie Tian circulated the power within his spiritual sea, spiritual power of different attributes ran through his meridians without any obstructions.

That was when he suddenly realized that not only were his injuries completely healed, but he had even become stronger than ever.

Meanwhile, the green aura in his heart hadn't received any flesh power replenishment. It hadn't recovered the energy it had consumed to fix Nie Tian's fractured bones, much less accumulate enough flesh power to advance to the next level.

He knew that only more spirit beast meat would provide him with more copious amounts of flesh essence, and numerous spirit

beasts were roaming in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

If he wanted his bloodline to advance and develop a new bloodline talent, he would have to go on a hunt for more spirit beasts.

Aside from that, if he wanted to refine his vortex of star power and condense more stardew, he would have to remain in the Void Illusion Mountain Range to achieve that goal, instead of Shatter City.

Soon, he made his decision.

After cooking a piece of spirit beast meat for Pei Qiqi, Nie Tian handed it to her and asked, “How are you doing?”

“I’ve already fully recovered my spiritual power, but I might still need some time to heal my physical injuries,” Pei Qiqi answered with a plain tone.

Ever since Nie Tian had seen her weep in her dreams and opened up to her about his own misfortune, it seemed that the relationship between the two of them had become much tighter.

During the past few days, whenever Nie Tian cooked meat for Pei Qiqi and Pei Qiqi ate in a graceful fashion, she would voluntarily chat with Nie Tian for a bit.

She had explained the special features of the Realm of Split Void,



the complicated terrain in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and the strife between the three major forces to Nie Tian in detail.

“I’m leaving,” Nie Qian said in a soft voice.

“What?” Apparently, Nie Tian’s words took Pei Qiqi by surprise. “Where are you going?”

“I’m going to hunt for spirit beasts,” Nie Tian answered. “Besides, I need to practice cultivation in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. This place suits me better than Shatter City, so I plan to spend some time here.”

“This is very unwise,” Pei Qiqi said with a frown.

“I know,” Nie Tian said.

Pei Qiqi looked deeply into Nie Tian’s eyes and pondered in silence for quite a while. Then, she handed him a detailed map and pointed out a location for him, saying, “I’ve explored this area myself. There are a lot of low grade spirit beasts there, most of which are under the fourth grade. I think you’ll get what you are looking for there.”

Then, she showed Nie Tian the location of the Blood Skull’s base on the map, saying, “Now that you’re a guest elder of the Blood Skull, as long as you have enough spirit stones to pay them, they’ll let you use their portal to return to Shatter City.”

Nie Tian shook his head and said, “Thanks, but I don’t plan to use their portal to return to Shatter City.”

Confused, Pei Qiqi said, “Once I’m fully recovered, I’ll find a suitable location in the Void Illusion Mountain Range to lay my teleportation portal. You’re welcome to use it and return to Shatter City with me. I won’t charge you anything.”

Nie Tian shook his head again and said, “It won’t be necessary. When I’ve hunted enough spirit beasts, I’ll travel through the mountain range, cross the wasteland roamed by lurkers, and then find my way back to Shatter City.”

Pei Qiqi’s expression flickered slightly as she asked, “Are you sure you want to do this?”

“Yes, I am.”

“The route you just described is full of terrors. Your cultivation base is by no means high enough to allow you to do that. If you insist on doing that, it’s very likely that you won’t make it back to Shatter City alive.”

“If I can’t make it back alive, then I’ll just die out here.”

Pei Qiqi stood, aghast.

She looked Nie Tian up and down with a measuring gaze, and after a short while, she nodded gently and said, “I wish you good

luck.”

Afterwards, she took out a medallion from within her ring of holding and open the sealing ward for Nie Tian.

“You take care.” With these words, Nie Tian leaped into the air and burst through the waterproof ward.

Seeing him charge through the ward, Pei Qiqi whispered to herself, “This guy is just as crazy as Li Langfeng, if not crazier.”

She still couldn’t understand why Nie Tian would choose the most dangerous way back when he could return safely via her teleportation portal.

When Nie Tian left, the determined and unyielding look in his eyes was carved deeply into Pei Qiqi’s mind.

“Another unfortunate soul,” she sighed.

She believed that, just like Li Langfeng, Nie Tian must be also motivated by some great misfortune.

The path Nie Tian had chosen was no different from Li Langfeng’s by nature.

Li Langfeng cultivated with the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth, while Nie Tian consumed tainted spirit beast meat.

They both acquired strength at the cost of their own lifespan. Only their methods varied.

She had already predicted that Nie Tian would die in his prime, like a shooting star plummeting to its extinction after a moment of glory.

For some reason, when she thought that the day would soon come for Nie Tian, a sense of sadness and sympathy rose in her heart.

# Chapter 281: Receiving Enlightenment from the Fragmentary Star Incantation

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Three days later, around the perimeter of a dense forest in the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

Nie Tian was crouching beside a third grade Ice Scale Lizard, carefully carving open its thick, ice-cold scales. Then, he took out a number of sizable wooden barrels and filled them with its blood.

This dense forest was the region Pei Qiqi had marked out for him on the map, which was a major habitat for spirit beasts.

Numerous second grade and third grade spirit beasts roamed the perimeter of the dense forest. Since their strength was rather limited, Nie Tian hadn't encountered much difficulty killing them.

According to Pei Qiqi, high-grade spirit beasts resided at the heart of the dense forest.

Although she hadn't seen them personally, rumor had it that there were fourth grade and even fifth grade spirit beasts in the depths of the forest. Considering that it was so dangerous, no Qi warriors dared to explore the deepest parts of the forest, so it was hard to say if there were sixth grade spirit beasts there.

The strength of a fifth grade spirit beast could match that of a Worldly realm Qi warrior, and the strength of a sixth grade spirit beast would be equivalent to that of a Profound realm Qi warrior.

Pei Qiqi had warned him to stay at the outer edge of the forest and told him that he mustn't go on a suicide mission by marching deep into the forest.

Nie Tian took her advice and only hunted spirit beasts around the perimeter of the forest.

To this point, he had already slaughtered four third grade spirit beasts, dismembered them, and stored their flesh, bones and blood in his bracelet of holding.

He was aware that he need to stock up on spirit beast meat so that he could consume it everyday to provide the green aura in his heart with rich flesh power, preparing it for its next upgrade.

That was the reason why he was exerting all measures to hunt spirit beasts.

On the other hand, since he and Pei Qiqi had hidden out in the Blood Skull's secret stronghold under the creek for days and heard nothing, he assumed Li Langfeng had long since given up on chasing after them.

Furthermore, the Void Illusion Mountain Range was quite vast. The forest he was in was extremely far away and secluded. He didn't think he would be so unlucky that he would run into Li Langfeng again here.

After putting the dismembered Ice Scale Lizard into his bracelet of holding, Nie Tian sought out a giant, dead tree that was hollow inside.

He assumed the lotus position inside the hollow tree and began to refine the Ice Scale Lizard's blood.

The Blood Refining Incantation allowed him to extract and absorb only the essence of the blood, leaving the filth and impurities at the bottom of the wooden barrels.

As wisps of flesh power rose from the barrels and flew into Nie Tian's heart, where the green aura resided, one barrel after another was rapidly emptied.

It wasn't long before every last drop of the Ice Scale Lizard's blood was consumed, and all the flesh power it contained was gulped down by the green aura.

However, Nie Tian knew that the blood of an Ice Scale Lizard was far from enough to satisfy his bloodline aura.

He could still sense its greediness and endless yearning. "How am I supposed to fill this bottomless pit...?"

With a bitter smile, Nie Tian took a few pieces of dried spirit beast meat from his bracelet of holding and started munching.

He had made jerky out of the spirit beasts he had slaughtered

during the past few days so that he could eat their meat more conveniently.

Whenever his stomach was empty, he would immediately take the meat jerky out and eat it without needing to cook it.

The energy the meat jerky produced was also rapidly devoured by the green aura in Nie Tian's heart.

As it did, Nie Tian used spirit stones and cultivation materials of the wood and fire attributes to refine and expand his spiritual sea.

In the meantime, his seven Heaven Eyes floated in the vicinity like invisible lanterns, capturing even the most subtle changes within a range of several hundred meters and reflecting them in Nie Tian's mind.

It was these Heaven Eyes that allowed him to steer clear of fourth grade spirit beasts and powerful Qi warriors in the region, keeping him safe.

With a peaceful mind, Nie Tian cultivated wholeheartedly.

After some time, however, one of his Heaven Eyes captured a vague conversation between three people.

Therefore, he spared some attention to command that Heaven Eye to fly closer to the source of the sounds.



Three Heaven stage Qi warriors, who were dressed differently from one another, were talking as they marched.

The content of their conversation concerned the Blood Skull, the Dark Moon, and the Wild Fire.

Nie Tian listened with rapt attention.

As the three of them walked further and further away, their voices grew weaker before eventually exiting the Heaven Eye's range of detection, but Nie Tian had already obtained all the information he needed to know.

Just like him, those three people were also here to hunt low grade spirit beasts at the outer edges of this forest.

However, they were only after the spirit beasts' bones, skin, and teeth, which they could use to trade for spirit stones.

They had come from Ash City.

On their way here, they had heard about the recent conflict between the Blood Skull, the Dark Moon, and the Wild Fire in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

However, they didn't know the real reason behind the conflict, and could only assume that precious treasures had been discovered

and the three major forces were fighting over them.

According to them, the Dark Moon had suffered great losses, and Ma Jiu was leading the rest of his men out of the Void Illusion Mountain Range and back to the Land of the Abandoned.

As for Gu Yu and his Blood Skull members, they were chasing after them, hoping to annihilate them in the mountain range.

Fu Heng from the Wild Fire had also joined in the small-scale fights between Blood Skull and Dark Moon members.

The fierce conflicts had attracted the attention of every explorer in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, many of whom were speculating as to what had happened, asking around, and looking for an opportunity to obtain some benefits for themselves.

Among other things, the three of them also mentioned Li Langfeng.

Li Langfeng, who they referred to as “the poisonous man”, was currently searching for a young man named Hua Tian in an area that was very far from this forest.

Like a madman, Li Langfeng would question every person he ran into about Hua Tian’s whereabouts, and murder them after getting no useful answers.

At this moment, not a single explorer dared to enter the area Li

Langfeng was in.

Eyes narrowed, Nie Tian let out a cold snort. “I can’t believe that man is so persistent...”

After his fight against this poisonous man, Nie Tian had obtained a good understanding of his terrifying battle prowess.

Considering his strength, no one was able to defeat him in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, unless the Worldly realm experts of the Blood Skull, the Dark Moon, or the Wild Fire descended upon the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Although Ma Jiu, Gu Yu, and Fu Heng were also at the late Greater Heaven stage, none of them would stand a chance fighting him.

That was why Li Langfeng had so daringly slaughtered all those he had encountered.

Nie Tian was aware that, even if he decided to use the Flame Dragon Armor, he probably wouldn’t be able to beat Li Langfeng. Therefore, after getting a grasp of Li Langfeng’s whereabouts, he decided to avoid going near that region at all times.

With these thoughts in mind, Nie Tian refocused himself as he sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into one of the fragmentary star marks on his chest to learn about the magic named Starstrike.

Starstrike was one of the three secret magics recorded in the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation, and it was a powerful attacking magic that allowed Nie Tian to condense the stardew in his vortex of star power into a starspark.

Once a starspark, which carried extremely pure and rich star power, was formed, Nie Tian could channel it to his palm or fist before he struck his enemy. He could also command it to fly out from his body or infuse it into a spiritual tool.

Ever since Nie Tian had broken into the Heaven stage, he had studied Starstrike with concentrated attention whenever he had the time.

At this point, he had finally understood the method to condense and form starsparks.

As a thought appeared in his mind, the vortex of star power in his spiritual sea began to rotate at a high speed, and the stardew at the bottom of the vortex gradually concentrated and formed a starspark.

The starspark that looked very much like a fragmentary star ran through his meridians at lightning speed before coming to a stop in his left palm.

Nie Tian opened his eyes and splayed his left hand. He could clearly see the starspark twinkling within his palm like a bright star, lighting up his entire left hand.

The power from the starspark gave him a mysterious feeling, as if he was holding a star in his hand.

Afterwards, he pressed his palm against the inside of the hollow tree.

Upon contact, blindingly bright light immediately shot out of the starspark in all directions.

In the next moment, the starspark exploded, giving rise to waves of extremely strong power, causing the hollow tree to explode into tiny pieces of wood.

Sitting amongst the debris of the tree, Nie Tian once again closed his eyes and cast the magic in his mind. Soon, the stardew in his vortex of star power condensed into another starspark.

This time, he focused his attention and channeled it to the tip of his index finger.

It seemed as if a star had fallen out of the heavens and landed on the tip of his finger.

**SHEW!**

With a gentle motion, Nie Tian flung the starspark out of his fingertip. Like a shooting star, it flew towards a nearby tree, which was several times larger than the one he was in.

CRUNCH!

The tree instantly split, exploded, and rained splinters on the ground.

From the look of it, the might of the starspark was rather formidable, whether it was used to strengthen his strikes or to directly bombard the target.

Every starspark contained an explosive star power that was many times richer than the stardew.

Nie Tian calmed himself and continued to create more starsparks.

Soon, one starspark after another appeared in the center of his palm, like stars decorating the heavens.

By the time a fifth starspark appeared, he began to experience great difficulty in forming a sixth.

However, when he examined his vortex of star power, he found that there was still plenty of stardew in it.

Therefore, he decided to gather his attention and use his Heaven Eyes to keep track of the whole process of him creating starsparks.

Firstly, he reversed the process and returned the energy of the five starsparks into his vortex of star power. Then, he started condensing starsparks again.

He noticed that when the first starspark appeared in his palm, everything seemed normal.

However, when a second starspark appeared, a profound connection between the two starsparks seemed to be established.

The connection seemed to have aligned the two starsparks into an unfathomable spell formation and brought their might to a new level.

When a third starspark shone into appearance, it seemed to rapidly connect to the two existing starsparks in a mysterious way.

Just like that, a new formation of starsparks came to form.

The formation didn't just simply bring the power of the three starsparks together, but rather it multiplied their strength by many times.

The same thing happened when a fourth and fifth starspark appeared; the starsparks were realigned to form new and stronger formations!

“The formation is multiplying their might instead of adding their might together. With every starspark added to the formation, their

destructive force rises manyfold!” Nie Tian finally came to realize how the starsparks worked.



# Chapter 282: Starspark Formation

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Now that Nie Tian thought about the process, everything made sense.

When he formed the first starspark, it was as easy as rolling over a log.

However, when he formed the second starspark, it required not only several times more stardew, but more effort and devotion.

By the time the fifth starspark appeared, the time and energy he had consumed to form it had surpassed that of the previous four starsparks combined.

The reason why he couldn't create a sixth starspark and add it to the formation of starsparks was probably because it was currently out of his reach, considering his cultivation base.

Furthermore, he had also noticed that when he was exerting all his power to form the fifth starspark, his four vortexes of spiritual power had rotated abnormally fast.

Even his spiritual sea became somewhat unstable; huge waves rampaged through the normally-calm surface of his spiritual sea.

By the time the fifth starspark finally formed, he found that he had somehow consumed a substantial amount of spiritual power.

Perhaps his inability to form a sixth starspark had a great deal to do with his cultivation base, the development of his spiritual sea, and the resilience of his fleshy body.

He still needed more time to peel back and solve the profundity of this matter.

After reaching a brief understanding of the magic, Nie Tian took a deep breath and flung the formation of five starsparks out of his palm. “Go!”

As the five starsparks sailed through the air at lightning speed, they continued to maintain their formation, and the distances between them didn’t change noticeably.

BOOM!

The five of them simultaneously crashed into the trunk of an enormous ancient tree like five falling stars.

Upon impact, the tree didn’t split and explode like the ones before.

Rather, under the extremely powerful clash, the tree that reached into the heavens was immediately reduced to a world of flying wooden bits.

When the blinding light faded away, Nie Tian walked toward the location where the tree used to be, his face filled with shock.

The several dozen meter-tall tree was already nowhere to be found; all he could see were countless bits of wood falling from the sky like it was snowing.

Nie Tian looked down and saw a half-meter-deep hole in the solid ground.

Facing the falling bits of wood and the huge hole in the ground, Nie Tian couldn't help but marvel.

“The might of this strike can be even compared to that of a Rage Punch! Moreover, I don't have to fight an enemy at close quarters to use it! Simply marvelous!

“Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace... Fragmentary Star Incantation... Starstrike...”

Nie Tian was very excited as he finally saw for himself the might of the legacy he had obtained from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace.

It was also at that moment he noticed that the ancient characters that had carried the mysteries of the Starstrike were rapidly growing blurry and vanishing from the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

No matter how hard he looked, he could no longer find any description of the Starstrike in that fragmentary star mark.

However, the method of how to form starsparks had already been permanently carved in his mind, meaning that he had already mastered the profound truths of this magic and made it part of himself.

In light of this, by the time he mastered Starshift and Starfall, the other two magics recorded in the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation, the first fragmentary star mark would disappear completely.

During the following few days, Nie Tian continued to practice the Starstrike as he hunted more second and third grade spirit beasts at the outer edge of the dense forest.

As he did, his understanding regarding how to cast this magic and form starsparks rose to new heights.

Even still, however hard he tried, he failed to form a sixth starspark in his palm.

Only then did he realize that he might have to make a significant breakthrough to be able to create the sixth starspark and form a new formation of starsparks.

It could be a breakthrough in his cultivation base, another round of expansion to his spiritual sea, or building his physical strength to certain degree.

After realizing that it was out of his reach for the time being, Nie Tian decided not to waste more time and energy on it, and thus put that thought on hold.

He turned to another problem that had been bothering him.

When he had repeatedly tried to form new starsparks, his stock of stardew ran low very quickly.

Even though he had spent every single night channeling star power from the heavens into his vortex of star power, the speed at which he generated stardew was still too slow.

In light of this, he took out the handful of cultivation materials that contained star power from his bracelet of holding and drained their power.

Cultivating with those materials was clearly more efficient than cultivating with starlight.

However, his collection of that kind of cultivation material was very limited, and he thus ran out in a short time.

Nie Tian sighed as he sat on the branch of a tall, ancient tree, contemplating, “Those cultivation materials were just like spirit stones. The only difference was that, instead of carrying spiritual power, they carried star power.

“If I can get more of them, I’ll be able to cultivate just as well in

Shatter City, and I won't be stuck in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

“I just need to find out where I can get more of them...”

All of a sudden, one of his Heaven Eyes detected a band of six people.

It wasn't the first time Nie Tian had detected them since he had come to this forest.

Via his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian heard their conversations, and rapidly learned the goal and destination of their trip.

The six of them were all at the Heaven stage and had come from Shatter City; four of them were at the middle Heaven stage, and two were at the late Heaven stage.

They had started by hunting second and third grade spirit beasts around the perimeter of this forest.

However, they only took the skin, horns, and teeth of their prey, which they could use to trade for spirit stones after returning to Shatter City.

In the following days, Nie Tian tailed them and put away the spirit beast flesh and blood which they had discarded.

In that way, Nie Tian didn't need to fight spirit beasts himself, but could still obtain valuable spirit beast meat and blood without breaking a sweat.

For that reason, he kept observing them via his Heaven Eyes and maintained a reasonable distance from them as he tailed them.

After roaming about at the outer edge of the forest for a few days, the six of them gradually grew tired of hunting third grade spirit beasts. Therefore, they decided to go to the next level: go deeper into the forest and hunt fourth grade spirit beasts.

The strength of a fourth grade spirit beast matched that of a Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior, making them much more dangerous than third grade spirit beasts.

If the six of them split up to search for spirit beasts, no matter which of them encountered a fourth grade spirit beast, they would undoubtedly fall prey to it.

However, if they traveled and acted as a whole, they would have a good chance of killing a fourth grade spirit beast together, but their searching efficiency would drop significantly.

On another issue, if they marched deeper into the forest, they might encounter two fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time.

Considering their battle prowess, they wouldn't stand a chance fighting two fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time.

Just like that, their discussion went on and on.

Soon, via his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian heard them discussing bringing in new members to make their team stronger, so that they would be able to march deeper into the forest.

Sitting in the tree, Nie Tian couldn't help but wonder, "Fourth grade spirit beasts..."

During the past few days, all the meat he had consumed had been from second or third grade spirit beasts, which contained far less flesh power than the meat of the Golden Stone Rhino.

Considering that he could only consume a certain amount of meat in one meal, if he could switch the meat he consumed to that from a fourth grade spirit beast, the amount of flesh power he could obtain from a single serving would increase severalfold.

Since those six people were only after the spirit beast's bones, teeth and skin, and they had no interest in the spirit beasts' flesh, they would probably be happy to add Nie Tian to their team if Nie Tian could help them slaughter fourth grade spirit beasts, but only demanded the spirit beasts' blood and flesh.

"Perhaps I should help them make up their mind." After pondering for a while, Nie Tian jumped off the tree and rapidly moved towards the location of the six people.



As he drew closer, he intentionally stomped his feet.

One of the late Heaven stage cultivators was the first to sense Nie Tian's movement. Like an alarmed bird, he called out, "Who's there?!"

At the same time, the other five also seemed rather rattled as they hastily drew their spiritual tools and prepared for battle.

They knew very well that danger could be lurking in any dark corner in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Most of the time, people were more deadly than powerful spirit beasts.

Since they had teamed up and explored in the Void Illusion Mountain Range for years, they could tell it was a person the moment they heard Nie Tian's footsteps.

They knew that the Void Illusion Mountain Range was especially turbulent these days.

They were afraid that they would get involved in the conflicts between the three major forces or encounter the reckless maniac, Li Langfeng.

When Nie Tian showed up in front of them, their leader examined Nie Tian with his psychic awareness, and discovered that Nie Tian was merely at the early Heaven stage. Only then did his suspended heart ease up.

However, as soon as his sense of danger was eliminated, a new idea rose in his heart. Even the way he looked at Nie Tian grew strange.

It was all about killing and being killed in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Once someone weak showed up, the first thought that came to their heads was to kill him and take his valuables.

Nie Tian instantly saw through their minds and said, “I’m a guest elder of the Blood Skull.”

Then, he took out his identity medallion and showed it to them.

“A guest elder of the Blood Skull?” Their leader’s expression flickered slightly after getting a clear view of the Blood Skull pattern on Nie Tian’s identity medallion.

The six of them had come from Shatter City, so they respected the power of the Blood Skull. Even though what Nie Tian had was only an identity medallion for a guest elder, it made a significant impact on their hearts.

After all, they were aware that a guest elder of the Blood Skull might very well be more powerful than a formal Blood Skull member.

“I think the kid is playing with us.” Face filled with suspicion, a

middle Heaven stage woman questioned Nie Tian's identity. "He's only at the early Heaven stage. Why in the world would the Blood Skull offer him a guest elder's identity medallion? We've lived in Shatter City for years, but we've never heard of the Blood Skull taking in a guest elder with such a low cultivation base!"

Nie Tian laughed broadly and said, "Believe it or not, my name is Li Tian, and I mean you no harm. If you're marching deeper into the forest, I want to join you. I'll help you kill fourth grade spirit beasts if we encounter any. All I want is their blood and meat; all the rest are yours."

"You only want the blood and meat?" The man went blank for a moment. "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I am."

## Chapter 283: Welcome to Join Us

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A middle Heaven stage female cultivator seemed to have seen through their leader's intention. She hastily jumped in and said loudly, "No! Adding him to our team won't do much to improve our battle prowess. He's too weak! His cultivation base is lower than any of ours. What will change if we let him join us?"

"If we really run into two fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time, we'd still get killed. What can he do?"

The woman protested strongly, as she was the one who had firmly objected to the idea of marching deeper into the forest in the first place.

Nie Tian frowned as he looked at her with a measuring gaze.

After secretly observing the six of them for days, he had already obtained a rather thorough understanding of their names, strength, and relationships with each other.

The woman's name was Lu Yan, and she was cautious by nature. During her previous exploration trip to this dense forest, she and her team had encountered danger, and many of her companions had been killed.

That time, she and her team had marched into deeper parts of the forest and unexpectedly run into two fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time.

There had been a dozen people on her team, and five of them had been at the late Heaven stage.

However, only four of them had survived their encounter with the two fierce fourth grade spirit beasts.

That battle had scarred Lu Yan for life. Therefore, she insisted on hunting low grade spirit beasts at the outer edge of the forest, and was strongly opposed the idea of entering deeper into the forest.

“The yield of hunting only second and third grade spirit beasts is indeed too low,” Shen Wei, the leader of the team, said with a frown. “I’ve recently set my mind on a spiritual tool, so I’m in need of spirit stones. If we continue to only hunt second and third grade spirit beasts, I’m afraid that I won’t be able to gather enough wealth even if we keep hunting for six more months.”

Looking Lu Yan in the eye, Shen Wei continued, “Now that we’ve decided to come to the Void Illusion Mountain Range, we should know that we may encounter danger at any moment. Even if we don’t march deeper into the forest, we may face other crises. Not to mention that our way back to Shatter City will be much more dangerous than our way here. It’s even hard to say if we can survive those lurking bandits and make it back to Shatter City alive.

“I say we risk it!”

“If you all are bent on going, you’ll have to go without me!” Lu

Yan said with great determination in her voice.

Seeing that the two of them held completely opposite opinions, the other four said a few things to calm the tension.

As an outsider, Nie Tian could only stand there with his arms folded and wait for them to cool down.

At that moment, another female cultivator named Song Li shot a glance at Nie Tian and asked, “Li Tian, is it?”

She was also at the late Heaven stage, the same as Shen Wei.

However, unlike Shen Wei, she was mellow by nature, and thus she didn’t like being the leader. She had a fairly beautiful face, as well as the makings of delicate and modest lady.

It seemed that she wasn’t fond of fighting over things, and she had always been the peacemaker of the team.

Nie Tian nodded. “Yeah.”

Thanks to Li Langfeng, his identity as Hua Tian had become rather well-known.

During the past few days, many Qi warriors who roamed the Void Illusion Mountain Range, including members of the Dark Moon and the Wild Fire, had learned the name ‘Hua Tian’. It wouldn’t be

safe if he continued to use that name.

Therefore, he borrowed Li Ye's first name and called himself Li Tian.

“As you can see, we have six people on our team, and I bet you know how it is in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.” Song Li looked Nie Tian up and down with a measuring gaze, and then asked Nie Tian, with her pretty, water-like eyes looking deeply into his, “What gave you the courage to come to us?”

By saying that, she meant that brutal fights occurred in the Void Illusion Mountain Range all the time. Normally speaking, whenever two sides of unequal strength met, conflict would definitely break out.

The stronger side would never allow the weaker side to leave without paying a price.

Not only was Nie Tian traveling by himself, but he was also only at the early Heaven stage. The fact that he dared to voluntarily approach them confused Song Li.

It didn't matter to them if Nie Tian's identity as the Blood Skull's guest elder was authentic or not. Even if it was authentic, that didn't make him an official member of the Blood Skull, so killing him wouldn't be a big deal.

The Blood Skull wouldn't make a fuss about the death of a guest

elder.

Song Li's take on the matter resonated with Shen Wei, Lu Yan and the other three.

All of them wondered why Nie Tian, an early Heaven stage cultivator, dared to come before them.

Nie Tian smiled and said, "You might not believe me, but the reason I dared to come to you is because I know that the six of you won't be able to take me in a fight. If I want to leave, you won't be able to stop me."

Nie Tian thought that by assuming a stronger manner, he might increase Lu Yan's confidence.

The only reason why Lu Yan refused to march deeper into the forest was that she feared that they would encounter the same devastating situation as she had before.

"You're quite a big talker!" Lu Yan said loudly.

With a meaningful roll of her eyes, Song Li asked Nie Tian, "Do you really think you can deal with the six of us single-handedly? Do you mind proving your strength to us?"

Having observed them for days, Nie Tian had long since learned that Song Li had already secretly communicated with Shen Wei.



As a matter of fact, it was Song Li who had put the idea of marching deeper into the forest into Shen Wei's mind.

It was only because Shen Wei was their leader that it was more persuasive if he made the proposal to all the team members.

Song Li was the one who desired to go deeper into the forest and hunt fourth grade spirit beasts the most.

"Hahaha, what's there to prove?" Nie Tian once again shook the identity medallion in his hand, saying, "This identity medallion speaks for itself."

"Can I have a look at it?" Song Li asked.

"No problem." Nie Tian threw his identity medallion towards her without any scruples.

He knew that every guest elder's identity medallion was infused with a unique psychic awareness when presented to them.

Complicated spell formations had been implanted into those identity medallions when the Blood Skull had made them.

One spell formation could only be infused with psychic awareness once. Once its owner died, the psychic awareness within the medallion would dissipate, and the spell formation would self-

destruct. Thus, the medallion would lose its meaning.

In light of this, Nie Tian wasn't worried that Song Li would take the identity medallion for herself.

Song Li grabbed the identity medallion and examined it carefully before handing it back to Nie Tian.

With a somewhat strange look in her eyes, she turned to Shen Wei, who was standing next to her, and said, "It's real."

Shen Wei was greatly surprised at heart.

Although both he and Song Li were at the late Heaven stage, he had lived in Shatter City for a much longer time.

It was very clear to him that the Blood Skull would never offer their guest elder's command medallions to people without a reason.

However, Nie Tian was only at the early Heaven stage.

It meant that Nie Tian must not be an ordinary person; there must be something special about him.

Moments ago, the idea of playing by the norms of the Void Illusion Mountain Range and murdering Nie Tian had appeared in his mind.

However, after Song Li had confirmed that Nie Tian's identity medallion was authentic, he immediately called off that idea.

Lu Yan let out a cold harrumph and said, "Even if his identity medallion is real, his cultivation base is still too low! It takes the six of us working together to handle one fourth grade spirit beast. No matter how resourceful he is, I don't believe he can kill a fourth grade spirit beast single-handedly. If he can't do that, then once we encounter two fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time, we'll still die beyond the shadow of a doubt!"

"You're right. I can't kill a fourth grade spirit beast by myself," Nie Tian answered, without hiding.

He also wanted to say that, with his Heaven Eyes, he would be able to prevent them from encountering two fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time.

It was just that the ethereal Heaven Eyes would exceed their level of understanding. If he went ahead and said it, they might consider him to be a liar.

Therefore, he dropped the idea of telling them about them.

Seeing that Lu Yan was not backing down a bit, Song Li proposed, "How about this: let all vote on this. Those who are willing to take on the risks and go deeper into the forest, let's have a show of hands."

Everyone except Lu Yan raised their hands one after another.

Nie Tian had long since learned that not only had Song Li persuaded Shen Wei, but she had also talked the other three into going.

Lu Yan was the only one who was unequivocal in her opposition to her proposal.

After noticing that everyone else had raised their hands, Lu Yan said, anger and embarrassment filling her face, “If you all have a death wish, then be my guest! I’m not going with you!”

Shen Wei also grew angry as he blurted, “Alright then. You can just stay here. We’ll go and hunt fourth grade spirit beasts by ourselves. It’s not like you’re so powerful that we can’t do it without you.”

“Good! I look forward to your triumphant return!” With these words, Lu Yan left, heart burning with anger.

“You’re welcome to join us,” Song Li said to Nie Tian, smiling.

It seemed that Lu Yan’s leaving didn’t have any impact on her, and she didn’t seem to value Lu Yan’s strength at all.

“You can join our team,” Shen Wei said. “But one thing to be

clear: I'll determine how we distribute the spoils after we've killed the spirit beasts. I'll do it according to each person's contribution, and you can't oppose me."

"I've said it, I'll only take the blood and meat," Nie Tian stated.

Shen Wei seemed surprised as he asked, "Are you serious?"

He had taken Nie Tian to be joking, because spirit beasts' meat and blood were of no value at all. Normally, people would just discard them.

"I'll say it one more time." Nie Tian said with emphasis. "I only want the spirit beasts' meat and blood, and I won't take anything other than those."

Shen Wei turned to look at his four team members, asking, "You heard him, didn't you?"

They all nodded.

"Good. You're part of the team now, Li Tian." Shen Wei said to Nie Tian.

## Chapter 284: Traveling in A Group

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With Lu Yan gone and Nie Tian in, there remained six people in the team.

Due to Lu Yan's absence, the team reached a consensus.

Nie Tian followed Shen Wei, Song Li, and the other three towards the deeper parts of the forest.

They encountered some scattered low grade spirit beasts along their way.

Since they were all at the second or third grade, Nie Tian only displayed his battle skills with the Flame Spirit Incantation.

Therefore, in Shen Wei and Song Li's eyes, Nie Tian was no more than a Qi warrior who cultivated fire incantations, and his battle prowess was about the same as Lu Yan's.

However, they didn't know that that was only what Nie Tian had let on.

They were both slightly impressed to see that Nie Tian possessed such battle prowess while he was only at the early Heaven stage.

However, the thought of the fact that Nie Tian was a guest elder of the Blood Skull put their minds at ease. After all, Nie Tian's

competence had been acknowledged by the Blood Skull.

Therefore, they weren't very surprised by Nie Tian's performance.

Of all five people, Song Li paid the most attention to Nie Tian. Every time they were engaged in battle with spirit beasts, she would keep an eye on Nie Tian, but she wasn't able to see that Nie Tian was intentionally reserving his strength.

The woman appeared quiet, and had a look of holding herself aloof from earthly matters. However, Nie Tian suspected that she was by no means ordinary.

Nie Tian made quite some gains hunting with the group for a few days.

Both Shen Wei and Song Li were at the late Heaven stage. Adding in the other three middle Heaven stage cultivators, and their efficiency was exceptionally high.

Nie Tian kept his word.

He only took the spirit beasts' blood and meat, leaving the skin, teeth, and horns to the others.

Thanks to the team, the speed at which he stockpiled spirit beast meat and blood improved by a great margin.

Meanwhile, the other five team members were satisfied with his good faith.

When they found out that Nie Tian really took nothing but the spirit beasts' blood and meat, the way they looked at Nie Tian grew more and more pleasant.

If Lu Yan was still on the team, she would have taken a share of the valuable parts of the spirit beasts.

Now that Nie Tian possessed the same battle prowess as Lu Yan, but claimed no share of the valuable spoils, it was like the five of them were splitting the share they should have given to Lu Yan.

Of course, that made them happy.

However, they were somewhat curious as to why Nie Tian would separate himself from the group every time they stopped to recuperate.

Nie Tian never used spirit stones to recover his strength with the rest of the group.

The reason why Nie Tian did this was because he had to consume large amounts of spirit beast meat.

If they saw Nie Tian wolfing down spirit beast meat, which was



filled with filth and impurities, they would consider him a monster.

Furthermore, Nie Tian needed to channel star power to form stardew in a secluded location. In order to keep his secrets, he had to separate himself from the group.

In the middle of one night...

Nie Tian had sought a secluded location far away from the other five, where he had consumed almost fifty kilos of spirit beast meat, before he adjusted himself and returned to the location where the rest of the group had set up camp.

At that time, he had already learned via his Heaven Eyes that Shen Wei and the others were about to finish their cultivation.

Sitting under a leafless tree, Shen Wei raised his chin and saw Nie Tian appearing in the distance and returning to the group, and then his expression became somewhat suspicious. "This guy always returns when we're just about to finish recuperation."

Song Li was sitting right next to him.

Just now, the two of them had been discussing and analyzing Nie Tian. Nie Tian's return didn't stop them.

Song Li slowly rose to her feet.

Having changed into short battle garments, she looked very well-built, like a female leopard. The battle garments emphasized her curves and make her look full of explosive power.

Shen Wei, who was still sitting on the ground, had his burning gaze fixed on her waist as he said with a fairly calm tone, “Song Li, do you think this Li Tian person has displayed all of his battle prowess in the past few days?”

For some reason, as they marched deeper into the forest, Song Li’s clothing, as well as the impression she gave people, had quietly changed.

In the beginning, she had been dressed in a long dress, which had given her a quiet and graceful look.

However, ever since they had decided to march deeper into the forest, she had changed into tight battle garments, which instantly highlighted her covered, hot body.

Actually, Shen Wei hadn’t known her for long, and he had only considered her as a rather competent teammate, nothing more.

However, as Song Li changed into tight garments, which brought out her perfect curves, Shen Wei couldn’t help but become interested.

During the past few days, he had sought Song Li out to talk to her

from time to time. When he had distributed the spoils, he had firstly distributed the parts that she had set her mind on to her.

“No.” Song Li said in a soft voice. “The way I see it, every time we fought, Li Tian didn’t go all out.”

Shen Wei’s eyebrows furrowed slightly as he said, “There’s something more to this Li Tian person. He showed up out of nowhere and demanded to join us. Do you think he has ulterior motives? We both know that the spirit beast blood and meat he demanded is of absolutely no value. Can it be that his demand for spirit beast blood and meat is only a disguise?”

Song Li pursed her lips into a smile as a taunting look appeared in her bright eyes. “There’s nothing to worry about. No matter how resourceful he is, he’s only at the early Heaven stage. Are you afraid that we can’t take him if he turns on us?”

After sensing Song Li’s teasing tone, Shen Wei let out a snort and said, “Of course I’m not afraid! I’m saying that he may not be alone.”

“Let me go and find out his real intentions,” Song Li said softly.

Then, with a faint smile on her lips, she swayed her waist as she slowly stepped towards Nie Tian.

Shen Wei swallowed his saliva as he watched her slightly exaggerated movement from behind, cursing in his heart, “Slut!”

Song Li paced her way to Nie Tian's side and asked with a smile on her face, "You've traveled and hunted with us for a few days now. How do you feel? Have you found something you don't like? If there's anything you're not happy with regarding our cooperation, you can tell me. I'll talk to Shen Wei."

At that moment, the other three middle Heaven stage cultivators were still recuperating and adjusting themselves with their eyes closed.

Only Shen Wei was looking at them from afar, sitting with his back against the tree.

Nie Tian was somewhat puzzled to see Song Li walk towards him, twisting her bottom and turning her waist.

Song Li had a rather beautiful face. She had worn a long dress before, which had concealed her alluring body. Furthermore, she had pretended to be quiet and understanding, which had also deducted from her charm.

However, now that she had completely overturned her previous look and manner, she had become much more attractive.

The way Shen Wei looked at her testified to this; it was almost as if he couldn't wait to eat her up.

The other three middle Heaven stage cultivators also awoke from

their cultivation and began to quietly discuss her, each of their eyes filled with burning desire.

Ever since Lu Yan had left, as the only female member on the team, Song Li seemed to have turned on her charm.

It was just that, at this moment, she seemed to have shifted her target from Shen Wei to Nie Tian.

Seeing her like this, not only was Nie Tian not thrilled, but he became even more alert.

He had long since had the feeling that she had ulterior motives for talking Shen Wei and the others into exploring deeper parts of the forest.

“No, everything is fine.” Nie Tian smiled and said with a plain tone. “Everybody takes what they need. It’s been rather pleasant working with you all. I only wish our journey ahead can be just as pleasant. I hope we won’t have differences and jeopardize our cooperation when we encounter fourth grade spirit beasts.”

“How can that be?” Song Li said with a charming smile. Then she sat down right next to Nie Tian and said, “I’m really curious as to how you got the Blood Skull to give you a guest elder’s identity medallion. Do you care to share the story?”

Smiling, Nie Tian shook his head. “I can’t, sorry.”

“Stingy...” Song Li pursed her lips, but she still had a broad smile on her face. “Alright then. Don’t tell me if you don’t want to. I’ve come to tell you that, from now on, we’re officially deep into the forest, and we can encounter fourth grade spirit beasts at any moment now. Therefore, don’t expect that our battles will go as smoothly as before.”

“I understand,” Nie Tian answered.

“One more thing,” Song Li hesitated for a moment before she lowered her voice. “Perhaps you don’t know it, since you don’t come here very often. Other than fourth grade spirit beasts, we might also encounter Hunters here, people who usually lurk outside of Shatter City, Ash City, and the Land of the Abandoned.”

“Hunters?” Nie Tian’s eyebrows furrowed. “Are you talking about people who make a living by killing explorers and taking their valuables?”

“Exactly,” Song Li said with a serious face.

# Chapter 285: Internal Strife

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A Hunter was a special term those who lived in the Realm of Split Void used to refer to a notorious group of people.

They usually lurked outside Shatter City, Ash City and the Land of the Abandoned year-round. Sometimes they also roamed about in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, ambushing Qi warriors on exploration trips.

Only members of the Blood Skull, Wild Fire, Dark Moon, and their guest elders had the privilege to use their teleportation portals to travel to the Void Illusion Mountain Range. All others would have to travel long distances on foot to get here and face the threat of Hunters.

Hunters were also divided into different groups and had their own territories. They would never show mercy to those who dared to explore the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

The only meaning of their existence was to rob adventurers of their gains in the Void Illusion Mountain Range and kill them.

Every Qi warrior who wasn't with the three major forces would have to go through them if they wished to return to their cities.

Many Qi warriors were very lucky and gained good fortunes in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

However, they weren't as lucky on their way back to their cities. A good proportion of them had all their gains reaped by Hunters, along with their precious lives.

After learning from Song Li that they could also encounter Hunters in deeper parts of the forest, Nie Tian was somewhat shocked.

Since he had only hunted at the outer edge of the dense forest, he had never realized that there might be Hunters in the heart of the forest.

At that time, he remembered that, before he had come to this location, Pei Qiqi had warned him that he shouldn't go on a suicide mission by exploring deep into the forest.

Perhaps Pei Qiqi had known that there might be Hunters here.

"Are the Hunters also after high grade spirit beasts in the depths of the forest?" Nie Tian asked.

"Not entirely," Song Li said with a grim expression on her face. "They do hunt spirit beasts, but it's not their primary goal. Their primary targets are adventurers like you and me, who have come to hunt spirit beasts and trade the valuable parts for spirit stones.

"In fact, the Hunters know this dense forest much better than us. They know which parts of the forest the powerful spirit beasts live and forage in. Once they make a move on them, they usually have



very good chance of succeeding.

“On the other hand, since we don’t get to spend as much time here as they do, we’re very disadvantaged in this aspect.

“There have been many occasions where exploration teams encountered two or even three fourth grade spirit beasts at the same time. Once this kind of situation happens, the whole exploration team will usually be annihilated.

“Even if there are any survivors, they will fall prey to Hunters.

“However, most Hunters will take advantage of their familiarity with the forest and steer clear of powerful spirit beasts. They preserve their strength and find opportunities to swamp teams like ours.

“Our way ahead won’t continue to be peaceful. Not only will we have to be on guard against powerful spirit beasts, but we will also need to look out for Hunters at all times.”

“Thank you for telling me this,” Nie Tian said.

Song Li put on a charming smile and said, “You’re welcome. Now that we’re on the same team, it’s only right that we share information. I’m only telling you about the Hunters so that you can be prepared and stay on guard against them.”

At that moment, the other three cultivators on their team rose to

their feet.

“We’re ready to go,” A man named Yin Tuo said loudly.

“Let’s head out!” Shen Wei called out.

He strode to Nie Tian and Song Li’s side, glanced at Nie Tian out of the corner of his eyes, and said to Nie Tian with an unpleasant tone, “All our previous battles are nothing compared to what awaits. I want you to prepare yourself for the real battles ahead.”

Ever since Song Li had started flirting with him, Shen Wei’s heart had been itching towards her. He was already bent on taking her flower after their trip to this dense forest was over. In his eyes, she was like a piece of meat for his exclusive consumption.

Therefore, the fact that she was so warm towards Nie Tian made him very unhappy, and the way he treated Nie Tian began to change.

However, since Nie Tian didn’t do anything technically and he was a guest elder of the Blood Skull, he could only endure and remain calm before things between Nie Tian and Song Li exceeded what was proper.

After a brief adjustment, the six of them once again headed out towards the heart of the dense forest.

More vigilant than before, Nie Tian formed all seven Heaven

Eyes and spread them all around his group, keeping a close watch on everything in their vicinity.

Before his conversation with Song Li, he had only used four Heaven Eyes.

After all, it required a wisp of soul power from the seven fragmentary stars in his soul to form a Heaven Eye, and his soul power was very precious and hard to recover.

That was why he had intentionally reserved his soul power before facing real danger.

However, now that they were marching closer towards the heart of the forest and they might encounter powerful spirit beasts at any moment, he couldn't afford to reserve his strength any longer, and released the seven Heaven Eyes together.

A hour passed...

One of Nie Tian's Heaven Eyes caught sight of three Qi warriors, who he had seen before at the outer edge of the forest.

It was from the three of them that Nie Tian had learned about the newest situation regarding the Blood Skull, the Wild Fire, and the Dark Moon, and the fact that Li Langfeng had been looking for him everywhere.

He had never expected to see the three of them here.

It seemed that they had just killed a fourth grade Blood Eye Crocodile. Immersed in excitement, they were cutting its blood-colored eyeballs and sharp teeth out of its head and peeling off its tough skin.

They were all covered in blood and looked rather bedraggled. Apparently, they had just gone through a fierce battle.

Seeing this, a meaningful expression appeared on Nie Tian's face as he said to his group, "I smell a faint bloody aura coming from that direction." He stretched his arm and pointed in the direction of the three explorers.

"Bloody aura?" Shen Wei's nose flared as he took a sniff of the air, but he didn't smell anything. With a strange look in his eyes, he asked, "Are you sure you are not mistaken?"

"I've got a keen sense of smell," Nie Tian answered.

"Alright then," Shen Wei nodded and said. "Hey everyone, let's take a look over there. Watch out, and I hope we can gain something."

Upon hearing his words, everyone picked up their pace.

It wasn't long before Shen Wei led their group close enough to the other group that he was also able to sense a distinct bloody aura.

Also at that moment, he rapidly made the judgment that they could easily take the other group.

With that thought in mind, Shen Wei immediately grew spirited.

SHEW!

He and Song Li dashed towards the other group at a speed that was faster than anyone else, and were the first ones to arrived on the scene.

“Hahaha! We’ve hit gold!”

The moment Shen Wei arrived and saw the condition the other group was in, he grinned.

Nie Tian and the others arrived shortly after them, and they also caught sight of the dead Blood Eye Crocodile and the three Heaven stage Qi warriors standing around it.

Amongst the three, one was at the late Heaven stage and two were at the middle Heaven stage.

Even if the three of them were at their peak state, their strength wouldn’t have been comparable to Shen Wei’s group, much less considering that they had just gone through a bloody fight.

“Where did you come from?” Shen Wei asked, holding his head high.

“Ash City,” one of the three answered.

“Ash City, good.” After hearing the man’s answer, Shen Wei seemed relieved as he waved his hand and said nonchalantly, “The Blood Eye Crocodile is ours now. As for the three of you, you can each leave one thousand spirit stones, and then you are free to go. Don’t let me see you again.”

The reason he didn’t attack them immediately was that he could tell that the three of them hadn’t lost all of their battle prowess, and one of them was at the late Heaven stage, the same as him.

Shen Wei made a rough assessment in his heart and concluded that, with their strength, they would be able to take the other group in battle, but they would also consume a considerable amount of energy themselves.

The area they were standing in was much more dangerous than the outer edge of the forest. Not only could they encounter high grade spirit beasts at any moment, but they might also be ambushed by Hunters.

Therefore, Shen Wei didn’t want to spend too much energy on the other group. For that reason, he just demanded that they leave their spoils and hand over some spirit stones before letting them go.

With long faces, the three of them secretly blamed their bad luck.

Since they had the courage to come to the mountain range, they were familiar with the cruel rules. The leader of the three took out three thousand spirit stones from his bracelet of holding and placed them on the ground without uttering a word. Then, he rapidly turned around and left with his two friends.

“Smart choice.” After the three of them left, Shen Wei stepped forward and stored the three thousand spirit stones in his own bracelet of holding.

“Big Brother Shen, shouldn’t we all have a share of the spoils?” Yin Tuo asked with a frown.

The corner of Shen Wei’s mouth rose as he said with an somewhat indifferent tone, “You? We didn’t fight them in battle, and you didn’t contribute anything, so these spirit stones are not yours to share. They left because they feared me and Song Li. You don’t think that it was you who scared them off, do you?”

Unpleasant expressions could be seen on the faces of Yin Tuo and the other two.

“Then where’s my share?” Song Li asked with a smile.

Shen Wei chuckled and answered, “I’ll give you your share when we recuperate tonight.”

Song Li nodded and said, “Alright.”

Seeing that Yin Tuo and the other two looked somewhat dissatisfied, Shen Wei added with a comforting tone, “Alright, alright, Song Li and I will each take one eye of the Blood Eye Crocodile. You three and Li Tian can have the rest of it.”

“The only good parts on a Blood Eye Crocodile are its eyes.” Yin Tuo mumbled. “All the rest are next to worthless.”

“It’s not like you did anything.” Shen Wei said, his face filled with displeasure. “I think it’s more than reasonable to let you have that that much.”

At that moment, Nie Tian jumped in and said, “I’ll just take the meat and blood. You’re welcome to have its skin and teeth.”

After hearing Nie Tian’s words, Yin Tuo’s indignation was slightly eased, and he stopped arguing with Shen Wei.

However, from the expressions on his and the other two’s faces, Nie Tian could tell that a grudge towards Shen Wei had already been formed in their hearts.

Yin Tuo mumbled, “Sure, we didn’t do much to contribute, but we’re only here because of Li Tian’s directions. At least Li Tian should have a share of the spirit stones...”

He defended Nie Tian against the injustice.



However, Shen Wei turned a deaf ear to his comments and stepped towards Song Li with a broad smile on his face, after which he helped Song Li gouge out the Blood Eye Crocodile's eyes.

## Chapter 286: The Prey

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As Shen Wei and Song Li stepped forward to cut out the Blood Eye Crocodile's eyes, Yin Tuo whispered to himself, standing where he was, "He really knows which parts to take."

The most valuable parts on a fourth grade Blood Eye Crocodile were its blood-colored eyes, which could be used to forge high grade spiritual tools.

If they traded the set of eyes in Shatter City, they could get at least 4,000 spirit stones in return.

Meanwhile, the Blood Eye Crocodile's skin, bones, and teeth together were worth no more than 1,000 spirit stones.

Furthermore, Shen Wei had also decided for himself and taken the 3,000 spirit stones the other group had coughed up.

From Yin Tuo's point of view, Shen Wei's distribution was very unfair.

Yin Tuo whispered to the other two, complaining that Shen Wei only wanted to play up to Song Li, and had completely ignored their feelings.

However, after all was said and done, Shen Wei was at the late Heaven stage, and was the leader of their team; despite their discontent towards him, they forced themselves to bear the

injustice and didn't confront Shen Wei.

With an expressionless face, Nie Tian stood beside the three of them and didn't utter a word.

To him, as long as he could get the Blood Eye Crocodile's meat and blood, his interests were secured.

In fact, he didn't have a problem with Shen Wei taking the 3,000 spirit stones.

He had already accumulated enough spirit stones by killing a large number of Dark Moon members. The valuables he had obtained from their bracelets of holding could be traded for even more spirit stones.

Therefore, he didn't attach much importance to how Shen Wei distributed the spirit stones.

The only thing he valued were the fourth grade spirit beast's meat and blood, which he could use to help his green aura transform and advance to the next level.

Soon, Shen Wei and Song Li took away the Blood Eye Crocodile's eyes and rose up, their faces filled with smiles.

"All the rest is yours to take." Shen Wei assumed the tone as if he was being very generous.

Yin Tuo and the other two didn't say anything. They walked over and stripped away the Blood Eye Crocodile's skin, bones, and teeth, leaving nothing but the flesh and blood to Nie Tian.

With a good mood, Nie Tian tapped a few barrels of the Blood Eye Crocodile's blood and then carved its gigantic body into pieces.

By the time he finished and stockpiled everything in his bracelet of holding, Shen Wei urged everyone to get moving again.

It was at that very moment that the tip of one of Nie Tian's eyebrows rose slightly.

He had been observing the movements of the three explorers they had set free via one of his Heaven Eyes, in case they might take up actions against them.

Originally, he had been able to sense their life auras moving further and further away, and it seemed that they didn't plan on retaliating.

However, at this moment, Nie Tian discovered that the fluctuations of their life auras had suddenly disappeared.

They disappeared so abruptly that it seemed unnatural.

Nie Tian gathered his attention and tried to gain a better view of

the situation over there via that Heaven Eye of his.

Moments later, he sensed one strong life aura at the location where the three explorers had been.

However, when he commanded his Heaven Eye to fly closer to get a clearer view, he discovered that it would exceed his range of control.

What he was certain of was that the life aura was so strong that it didn't seem to belong to a Heaven stage Qi warrior.

“Greater Heaven stage!” The notion shocked Nie Tian as he secretly recalled that Heaven Eye.

He speculated that the three explorers must have encountered and died at the hands of a Greater Heaven stage expert on their way out of the forest.

That was the only rational explanation for the sudden extinction of their life auras.

After drawing such a conclusion, Nie Tian immediately had a feeling that the man who had killed the three explorers was probably one of the Hunters that Song Li had told him about.

“Let's go that way.” The direction Shen Wei pointed out was none other than the one Nie Tian had speculated a Hunter was active in.

Even though Nie Tian's face didn't change a bit, his mind flickered as he thought to himself, "Shen Wei is not aware of the situation over there, is he?"

Song Li smiled as she said to Shen Wei with a teasing, soft voice, "Let's not go there. You really have a bad memory. That's the direction those three men fled in. They must have explored this region before we got here. Considering their condition, the direction they picked must be secure, and no spirit beast activity was found, so that they could find a location to recuperate."

By saying those words, Song Li meant that there probably weren't any spirit beasts in that direction.

"Ah, you're right. How forgetful of me!" Shen Wei smiled. "Well, where do you think we should go?"

Song Li pointed in the opposite direction. "Let's go that way."

"Good, then that's where we'll go." Shen Wei immediately agreed.

Seeing that Nie Tian, Yin Tuo, and the other two didn't object, Shen Wei led the team as they headed out again.

Marching with the team, Nie Tian secretly let out a sigh of relief. After all, he didn't want to encounter a Greater Heaven stage Hunter either.

If Song Li hadn't said anything, he probably would have. Otherwise, Shen Wei would have led the team into that Greater Heaven stage Hunter's ambush.

However, he knew it in his heart that if it had been him who had made the proposition to Shen Wei instead of Song Li, Shen Wei probably wouldn't have agreed outright like he had.

It was even possible that, after Nie Tian had advised him against it, he would have led his team there anyways, even knowing that it was a fiery pit.

From the way Shen Wei had looked at him during the past couple of days, Nie Tian suspected that something like this could really happen.

Nie Tian walked after Shen Wei and Song Li, who were walking side by side, talking and joking. His mind wondered, "This Song Li woman is nothing but a troublemaker. If she hadn't approached me, Shen Wei wouldn't treat me like this. Did she do it out of good intentions, or did she intentionally cause alienation between me and Shen Wei?"

The tightly-dressed Song Li, looked at from behind, was extremely curvaceous. As she swayed her waist from side to side, her full bottom trembled slightly, making her body almost irresistible.

As she talked to Shen Wei, smiling, she occasionally turned her

head back to remind Nie Tian and the others to be careful, as if she was afraid that they would feel left out.

Then, Nie Tian noticed that although Yin Tuo and the other two were rather discontent with Shen Wei, they were all quite warm towards Song Li.

Every time she turned her head back to chat with Shen Wei with a smile on her face, Yin Tuo and the other two couldn't remove their gazes from her slender waist and full bottom. Apparently, they were all very interested in this increasingly flirtatious woman.

“Women are dangerous.” Nie Tian thought to himself. “If this team ever has major differences or breaks up, it will be all because of this woman.”

About fifteen minutes later, one of Nie Tian's Heaven Eyes caught sight of a Golden Stone Rhino.

The fourth grade Golden Stone Rhino was covered in wounds and chewing the flesh from a dead Qi warrior on the ground.

The Qi warrior must have come to the dense forest to hunt powerful spirit beasts by himself.

However, for some reason, he had failed, and became food for the Golden Stone Rhino instead.



Immediately after seeing this via his Heaven Eye, Nie Tian raised his guard.

This time, he didn't say anything to Shen Wei, as he was confident that, considering their strength, the six of them would be able to overtake and slaughter the Golden Stone Rhino if there were no mishaps.

Moments later, when they were close enough to the Golden Stone Rhino, Shen Wei looked rather excited as he blurted, "Bloody aura! I've sensed a bloody aura!" Then, he bragged to Nie Tian, "Do you smell it?"

Nie Tian shook his head.

Disdain could be seen on Shen Wei's face as he said, "It seems that your keen sense of smell isn't so keen after all."

"Yeah, I guess it comes and goes." Nie Tian chimed in.

"Let's go and take a look!" With those words, Shen Wei was the first to speed off.

Within a short time, the group of six arrived at the location of the Golden Stone Rhino.

By the time they arrived, the fourth grade Golden Stone Rhino had already devoured the Qi warrior's whole body, and it was puffing and dusting off its hooves as it prepared to leave.

The sudden appearance of Nie Tian's group took it by surprise.

A fierce, bloodthirsty look instantly appeared in its wide eyes as it stared at Nie Tian and his group, as if it was assessing if it could take the six of them in battle.

Golden Stone Rhinos were a common breed of spirit beasts in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. They were usually grumpy, and would attack anyone in their view, unless it sensed a great threat.

The same went for this Golden Stone Rhino.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

After merely a moment of hesitation, the fourth grade Golden Stone Rhino charged madly towards Shen Wei, who was standing at the forefront of the group, the razor-sharp horn jutting out from its snout emanating a cold light.

Overjoyed, Shen Wei exclaimed, "Great! Let's do this! After we kill this Golden Stone Rhino, I'll only take its horn and leave the rest to you!"

He seemed rather psyched.

The only reason he had come to the Void Illusion Mountain Range was that he had set his mind on a spiritual tool in Shatter

City that agreed with him perfectly, and he needed enough spirit stones to purchase it.

According to his assessment, he would have to spend a much longer time in the Void Illusion Mountain Range in order to gather the valuables he needed to trade for enough spirit stones.

However, he found that his luck was unexpectedly good. He had already obtained 3,000 spirit stones and a Blood Eye Crocodile's eye from the other group.

If he could add this Golden Stone Rhino's horn to his possession, he would have gathered enough valuables and spirit stones, and he could immediately return to Shatter City, where he could purchase the spiritual tool.

"The rhino's horn is the most valuable part of it." Yin Tuo murmured.

Shen Wei heard him and shot a cold glance at him, asking, "Do you have a problem with that?"

Yin Tuo shook his head. "No."

"That's good." Shen Wei let out a snort and took the initiative to charge towards the Golden Stone Rhino while shouting, "Song Li! You attack its front and I'll attack its sides! The others fan out and attack its abdomen!"

The Golden Stone Rhino's weaknesses were its neck and abdomen.

Shen Wei had explored the Void Illusion Mountain Range for years and had fought Golden Stone Rhinos more than once, so he had a full understanding of their weaknesses.

One after another, numerous arm-length silver daggers flew out of Shen Wei's bracelet of holding and formed a web of blades as they whizzed towards the Golden Stone Rhino.

Song Li gave a soft chuckle and also bolted forward, her robust leopard-like physique piercing towards the Golden Stone Rhino like a sharp lance.

As she did, a green awl whizzed out of her sleeve, its sharp tip sputtering frosty light.

The Golden Stone Rhino, however, seemed to have sensed the threat, and immediately lowered itself as it charged madly towards Shen Wei and Song Li.

## Chapter 287: Ill Intentions

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Now that the Golden Stone Rhino had lowered itself, its belly almost grazed the ground as it charged forward, providing its vulnerable abdomen with better protection.

CLANG! CLANG!

The web of daggers flew into the Golden Stone Rhino's back, giving rise to metallic clashing sounds, as well as sputtering sparks.

As sharp as Shen Wei's daggers were, they weren't sharp enough to create any wounds on the Golden Stone Rhino's back.

A Golden Stone Rhino's back was its toughest part, which was golden-colored and as hard as a steel platter.

Its back could ward off attacks from most weapons. Normally speaking, people couldn't cut its back open with a sharp tool unless it was an extremely special spiritual tool.

FIZZ!

A beam of golden light suddenly shot out from the Golden Stone Rhino's horn, seemingly extending the horn two whole meters.

The beam of golden light rapidly pierced towards Song Li.

Song Li's expression remained calm as she assumed a firm grasp of her green awl and thrust it towards the beam of golden light.

BOOM!

A violent clash broke out from the contact point of the beam of golden light and green awl.

Song Li withdrew her awl as she took advantage of the impact to fly over the Golden Stone Rhino, landing lightly behind it like a feather.

ROOOOOOAR!

The Golden Stone Rhino let out angry roars as if it was pained by the stab. Immediately afterward, it turned around to chase after Song Li.

As it turned its gigantic body, Shen Wei's web of daggers suddenly spread out.

Like a shoal of fish, the silver daggers swiftly pierced towards the Golden Stone Rhino's exposed abdomen.

"What are you lot waiting for?!" Shen Wei thundered.

Upon hearing his angry roar, Yin Tuo, Nie Tian, and the other two fanned out to flank the Golden Stone Rhino. Each of them

brought out their spiritual tools and cast secret magics to attack both sides of the Golden Stone Rhino's abdomen.

Unlike Yin Tuo and the others, Nie Tian didn't have a spiritual tool to use, so he just operated the Flame Spirit Incantation to attack the Golden Stone Rhino with beams of fiery light.

On the other hand, Yin Tuo and the other three were brandishing spiritual tools that matched their respective cultivation attributes.

Although the spiritual tools they used were by no means exceptional, they were able to infuse their sword, lance, and pearl with their own spiritual auras, which were blue, gold, and brown. After the infusion, their tools seemed strengthened by the water-attributed, gold-attributed, and earth-attributed spiritual power.

As they attacked the Golden Stone Rhino from different directions, Nie Tian only used the Flame Spirit Incantation, and didn't go all out.

While condensing more beams of fiery light, he keep a close watch on everything happening on the battlefield.

Soon, he noticed that Song Li was extraordinary.

She and Shen Wei were the main forces of their battle against the Golden Stone Rhino. However, Shen Wei had been attacking from a distance away using his web of daggers. Not once did he dare to fight the Golden Stone Rhino in close quarters.

Meanwhile, as a woman, Song Li repeatedly attacked the Golden Stone Rhino head-on using her green awl.

Every time, she would charge straight into the incoming Golden Stone Rhino and meet the beam of golden light on its snout head-on with her green awl. Upon impact, she would float up into the air, slide over the enraged Golden Stone Rhino's back, and land lightly behind it, where she would gesture to provoke it again.

As long as it turned around, it wouldn't be able to keep its abdomen close to the ground.

Whenever it did, Shen Wei's web of daggers would swoop down from midair and rain on the Golden Stone Rhino's neck and abdomen, along with attacks from Yin Tuo, Nie Tian, and the other two.

However, the Golden Stone Rhino had already gone berserk and repeatedly turned around to lunge towards Song Li. Therefore, more and more wounds were cut open on its abdomen.

Blood dripped down its wounded abdomen and gradually painted the ground red.

Under the stabbing pain, the Golden Stone Rhino grew increasingly frenzied; its eyes grew bloodshot as it pursued Song Li unrelentingly, as if Song Li was the the only thing in its eyes now.



Song Li chuckled as her curvaceous leopard-like body flew swiftly over the rhino's head over and over, as if she was deliberately provoking it.

The strength of this fourth grade spirit beast could match that of an early Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior. In its current condition, if it fought Song Li one on one, it would probably be a draw.

However, Song Li had Shen Wei, Yin Tuo, Nie Tian, and others on her side. The five of them kept attacking the Golden Stone Rhino's vulnerable parts as Song Li drew its attention.

After all, the Golden Stone Rhino hadn't developed a high intelligence, so it couldn't control its temper.

It was precisely because it was bent on biting Song Li to death that Nie Tian and the others had the opportunity to wound it.

Nie Tian shook his head and said to himself, "A fourth grade spirit beast is still a beast, and doesn't have enough intelligence to deal with a band of human Qi warriors."

From what he could tell, as long as they kept attacking the Golden Stone Rhino like this, more wounds would be cut open in its abdomen, and it would soon die from blood loss and exhaustion.

Wrath had already seized the Golden Stone Rhino's mind as it continued to chase after the swift Song Li while ignoring all the others.

As a result, not only could it not get Song Li, but it also continued to sustain more injuries, which had already begun to affect the speed at which it moved.

As it continued to lose blood, it could only become slower and slower.

If it came down to that, its death would be imminent.

A pitiful expression stretched across Nie Tian's face. "What a waste... All that blood is being wasted, along with the copious amount of flesh power in it..."

BANG!

Song Li's awl once again met the long beam of golden light on the Golden Stone Rhino's snout. However, this time, she let out a muffled groan as her incomparably swift body failed to fly over the Golden Stone Rhino. "I've consumed too much spiritual power. I'm afraid I'll have to leave it to you guys!"

Song Li's face turned pale, as it seemed that she truly couldn't fight anymore. She immediately jumped away from the Golden Stone Rhino and ran towards Shen Wei, where she could seek shelter.

"No problem!" Shen Wei shouted. "You've done enough. We'll protect you from now on!"

The Golden Stone Rhino's target had always been Song Li alone. The moment it saw Song Li run towards Shen Wei, it turned around and chased after her.

"Thank you, Big Brother Shen," Song Li said in a soft, feminine voice.

At that moment, with beads of sweat rolling down her cheek, she seemed as if she had overexerted her power and she was on the verge of collapsing.

"Don't mention it!" Shen Wei laughed out loud as he drew a long saber and slashed it down on the incoming Golden Stone Rhino's beam of golden light.

Upon the strong impact, Shen Wei also let out a muffled groan. His expression flickered slightly as he hastily jumped backwards.

However, the Golden Stone Rhino didn't intend to give up.

At that moment, Song Li left from behind Shen Wei and ran towards Yin Tuo, as if she wanted to give Shen Wei some time to recover.

Upon seeing this, Yin Tuo grasped his sword tightly as he summoned all of his strength. When the Golden Stone Rhino was close enough, he swung his sword toward its beam of golden light at full force.

BANG!

Yin Tuo's sword exploded into shreds upon contact, and his body was thrown into the air like a kite with its string cut.

"Ahh!" Panic filled Song Li's face as she staggered backwards, as if she hadn't expected that Yin Tuo was so weak that he couldn't withstand a single blow.

Then, she rapidly ran past Yin Tuo, who just crashed heavily onto the ground, and ran towards her next target.

Having its eyes fixed on Song Li, the Golden Stone Rhino's huge hoof stomped on Yin Tuo's chest as it madly chased after her.

CRUNCH!

Yin Tuo's ribs were immediately shattered. With blood spurting out of his mouth like red arrows, he soon stopped breathing.

The other two middle Heaven stage cultivators' eyes grew wide and bloodshot as they screamed, "Yin Tuo!"

Hearing their voices, Song Li seemed to have found a new target as she rapidly ran towards one of them, shouting, "It won't be able to hold on much longer. You just need to stall it for a short while, and it'll be dead!"

At that moment, Shen Wei seemed to have recovered from the previous impact, and commanded his web of daggers to attack the Golden Stone Rhino's abdomen as it chased after Song Li.

Meanwhile, Nie Tian shot out beams of fire and attacked the Golden Stone Rhino from the other side.

At the same time, Nie Tian shot an ice-cold gaze towards Song Li, a strange smile appearing at the corner of his mouth.

His Heaven Eyes contained soul power, and could easily sense the fluctuations of spiritual energy inside of Song Li. The woman hadn't consumed much of her spiritual power at all.

Rather, she was still filled with vigorous spiritual power, and her battle prowess hadn't declined at all!

The only reason she had lied was so that she could seek protection from Shen Wei, Yin Tuo, and the others.

It was like she had planned Yin Tuo's death!

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

The Golden Stone Rhino, which had sustained another series of attacks to its abdomen, once again charged madly towards Song Li.

Even the beam of golden light that shot out of its sharp horn became slightly dimmer.

However, the members of Nie Tian's team, behind whom Song Li was now shrinking, had also consumed a significant amount of strength during this battle.

Seeing that the Golden Stone Rhino was charging towards him, the man could only summon all of his strength to meet the Golden Stone Rhino's strike.

BANG!

The lance in his hand exploded into pieces, and he was sent flying backwards by the impact. In even worse shape than Yin Tuo, he died before his body hit the ground.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" Song Li apologized to the man's corpse. However, she didn't stop for a second, and rushed towards her next target.

This time, she knew the man was dead, and thus didn't intentionally run past his corpse and lead the Golden Stone Rhino to stomp on him.

ZZZZZLA!

When the Golden Stone Rhino made another turn, Shen Wei commanded his daggers to cut open a large gash in the Golden

Stone Rhino's abdomen.

It howled madly as its intestines could even be seen through the gash.

However, even though it was dying, it was still bent on killing Song Li, instead of Shen Wei, who had just cut it.

“Hurry! Strike it another time and it will die!” Song Li inspired the third man's fighting spirit with a loud voice as she shrank behind him.

The man held a pearl in his hand. His face was covered in beads of sweat, and his eyes shone with the light of fear.

He also saw that the Golden Stone Rhino was dying, so he assumed a firm grip on his pearl and smashed it onto the beam of golden light on the rhino's horn, assuming that with any luck he might be able to kill it.

However, the faint golden light on the rhino's horn sudden began to shine brightly, as if its might had become strengthened.

Apparently, the Golden Stone Rhino had unearthed all of its potential, knowing that it was dying.

BANG!

Upon contact, the man's pearl exploded along with his arm.

Half of his body was mangled badly by the Golden Stone Rhino's reckless strike, and the man died a more horrible death than the previous two.

Song Li didn't even spare the man a glance, but rather ran towards Nie Tian like a frightened bird, her face filled with fear. "Li Tian! Help! Save me!"

"You just need to stall it for a short while and it will die! You're stronger than the three of them. I'm sure you're up to it!"



# Chapter 288: Vicious Woman

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Song Li scrambled towards Nie Tian.

The Golden Stone Rhino madly chased after her. The gash in its abdomen was so deep that its intestines could be seen.

The beam of golden light extending from its horn began to flicker; it was bright at one moment, but dim the next.

The fluctuations of its life aura had also become very unstable, as if it could drop to the ground and die any moment now.

However, Song Li was still its only target. Wherever she ran to, it chased after her.

Song Li's alluring figure was the only reflection in the beast's bloodshot eyes, as if killing her would put its heart at ease.

ZZZZZLA!

One of Shen Wei's dagger whizzed by and created another slit in the Golden Stone Rhino's abdomen.

It roared so loudly that heaven and earth started to tremble. Even still, it ignored Shen Wei and continued to charge towards Song Li.

At that moment, Song Li reached Nie Tian's side and shrank

behind him, where she called out with a pitiful tone, “Help me! Li Tian!

“I’ve spent too much of my strength. I’m afraid I can’t even run any more. Li Tian, the Golden Stone Rhino is just on the verge of dying. Strike it hard and finish it off!”

“Alright,” Nie Tian replied.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

The Golden Stone Rhino roared as it got closer, the beam of light on its snout becoming dazzlingly bright.

Along with its mountain-like body, an intense bloody aura rushed directly towards Nie Tian.

Hiding behind Nie Tian, the pitiful look on Song Li’s face was already gone.

The look in her eyes was cold and vicious as she secretly stepped backwards.

It was as if she was afraid that Nie Tian would be knocked flying by the Golden Stone Rhino, and that she would be implicated as it happened.

After she put ten meters between Nie Tian and herself, she

turned around to make a reassuring gesture towards Shen Wei, a complacent smile appearing at the corner of her mouth.

“It’s over,” she said inwardly.

A cluster of blazing flames was built up around Nie Tian’s clenched right fist. The flames flickered, as if there was more than one type of power within them.

He thought to himself, “This Rage Punch of mine consists of thirty percent of my strength. It’s probably enough to kill this dying Golden Stone Rhino.”

Via his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian had long since seen through the Golden Stone Rhino’s poor condition. The beam of golden light on its snout couldn’t stop flickering, like an oil-lamp that was burning out.

When the beam of golden light was brightest, Nie Tian jumped backwards and skillfully dodged its first attack.

As soon as the light dimmed, Nie Tian lunged forward at lightning speed and threw his punch towards the Golden Stone Rhino’s head. Like a burning meteor, Nie Tian’s fist met the beam of golden light on the beast’s snout.

Countless sparks sputtered in every direction as the gigantic Golden Stone Rhino’s dashing momentum was instantly stopped!

It was like a charging war chariot crashing into a mountain made of steel. Not only was it stopped, but it even trudged several steps backwards.

As it did, the deep gashes in its abdomen burst open, and its internal organs poured out along with its blood.

BOOM!

Finally, the huge Golden Stone Rhino collapsed to the ground.

As it took its last few breaths, blood flowed out of its foul-smelling mouth like a river.

Just like the light its horn had dimmed, the light in its eyes gradually faded away.

Song Li, who had intentionally distanced herself from Nie Tian, frowned as she looked deeply at Nie Tian from behind, suspicion filling her eyes.

Nie Tian had struck the Golden Stone Rhino right when the light of its horn was the dimmest. The timing was perfect.

Song Li knew very well that when the light was the dimmest, the Golden Stone Rhino was the weakest.

Therefore, she couldn't be sure whether it was because the

Golden Stone Rhino was too weak to withstand any kind of strike, or the might of Nie Tian's fist strike was so formidable that it instantly killed the Golden Stone Rhino.

Whatever the reason was, the result was that Nie Tian was breathing, and the Golden Stone Rhino was not.

At that moment, Song Li had already hid the coldness in her eyes and filled her face with smiles. She approached Nie Tian like a blossoming flower, saying, "No wonder the Blood Skull made you their guest elder. You're indeed much better than Yin Tuo and the other two guys. Killing the Golden Stone Rhino with merely one punch! This is simply marvelous!"

"I'm flattered," Nie Tian said with a fake smile. "Yin Tuo and those guys fought the Golden Stone Rhino with their lives. I just happened to be there when it was weak and about to die."

Song Li sighed, regret filling her face. "It's my fault. I got the three of them killed. If I could've hung on for a little longer, they'd still be alive."

"It's not your fault," Shen Wei said as he walked up to the Golden Stone Rhino's corpse. He went ahead and cut off its horn without getting consent from anyone. "We were only able to attack its vulnerable parts because you fought the Golden Stone Rhino head-on. If you didn't attract its attention for such a long time, how could we have killed it?"

"I've taken the horn. Song Li, you can have its eyes, skin, and

teeth.”

Then, Shen Wei turned to Nie Tian and said with a casual tone, “As we’ve agreed, you’ll have its blood and meat, okay?”

“Yeah,” Nie Tian answered with a smile.

“Great.” Shen Wei nodded as he sighed and changed the subject, “I’ve known Yin Tuo and those guys for years. I’ll take their bracelets of holding and give them back to their kin in Shatter City when we return.”

With these words, he walked to the bodies of Yin Tuo and the two others and stripped them of their bracelets of holding.

As he did, Nie Tian watched silently with an expressionless face.

He had observed the team for days before he had demanded to join them. Therefore, he knew that Shen Wei wasn’t that close with them at all.

Shen Wei merely said it so that he would have an excuse to take their gains during this trip for his own.

Nie Tian was well aware of what he was doing, but he pretended he didn’t, and let him have his way.

For one thing, he didn’t attach much importance to those

people's belongings. All he wanted were the Golden Stone Rhino's blood and meat.

For another, he still needed to figure out the true relationship between Shen Wei and Song Li. Hence, he had to remain silent to keep observing.

Shen Wei glanced at Nie Tian as he took the three bracelets of holding.

Seeing that Nie Tian assumed an indifferent attitude, Shen Wei didn't have any excuse to say anything else to Nie Tian. Then, he hinted at Song Li that she could harvest the rest of the valuable parts of the Golden Stone Rhino.

Song Li once again sighed over how regretful she was, getting Yin Tuo and those guys killed.

However, as she said those words, she skillfully cut off the valuable parts of the Golden Stone Rhino. Only after that did she turn to Nie Tian and ask after a moment of hesitation, "Are you sure you just want its meat and blood? You've made great contributions, and technically it was you who killed it. I'd be happy to give you some of the stuff if you want any."

Nie Tian shook his head. "No, thank you. I just need its meat and blood."

"Alright then." Song Li stepped away from the Golden Stone

Rhino and stood next to Shen Wei as she said to Nie Tian, “It’s all yours now.”

Under Song Li and Shen Wei’s strange gazes, Nie Tian smiled as he bent down to slice the Golden Stone Rhino’s meat into pieces.

As he did, he had his back facing the two the entire time, but he kept a close watch on them using three of his Heaven Eyes.

Shen Wei signaled Song Li with his eyes, but Song Li shook her head and objected to his evil proposal.

Nie Tian laughed coldly in his heart, as he had been waiting for them to give in to the temptation to attack him. Once they made the slightest move, he would immediately form his chaotic magnetic field.

However, Shen Wei took Song Li’s advice and didn’t act rashly.

Nie Tian rose to his feet after putting away the Golden Stone Rhino’s flesh and blood in his bracelet of holding. With a casual tone, he said, “I’ve consumed quite some strength, so I’ll find a place to rest and recover. I’ll come back to you when I’m done.”

Without waiting for Song Li and Shen Wei to say anything, Nie Tian walked away.

He left, but his Heaven Eyes didn’t. They still floated above them, and continued to keep a close watch on every move they made and



every word they said.

Shen Wei's face grew long as he let out a snort. "Why did you stop me? Don't tell me that you've developed feelings for him?"

"How can that be possible?! He's only a kid." Song Li rolled her eyes at him and laughed sarcastically. "I just think the kid is a bit strange. I can't tell whether the Golden Stone Rhino was that weak, or his punch was that powerful."

Shen Wei jeered and said, "He's only at the early Heaven stage. How powerful he can be? He said himself that Yin Tuo and the other two dumbasses wore out the Golden Stone Rhino's strength, and it was holding on to its last breaths as it charged towards him. He was just lucky to throw the last punch. Don't tell me that you really think he is that good!"

"But he's a guest elder of the Blood Skull after all. The Blood Skull would never give out a guest elder's identity medallion for no reason. If that punch of his was really that powerful, I say we'd better not provoke him." Song Li assumed a cautious attitude.

Shen Wei let out a cold harrumph. "Even if he is that good, he's still only at early Heaven stage. There's nothing to fear."

"Alright, alright." Shen Wei no longer wanted to talk about Nie Tian. He shamelessly rubbed himself on Song Li, saying, "The past few days have been quite stressful. Now that the Golden Stone Rhino is dead, we could use some relaxing..."

With these words, Shen Wei flung Song Li down on the ground and climbed on top of her, as if he couldn't wait any longer.

The corpses of Yin Tuo and the other two were still yet to be cleaned, but apparently Shen Wei was in no mood to deal with them. He pulled at Song Li's garments as if he wanted to take her right there, right now.

"Look how impatient you are... God..." Song Li scolded him, but her face was filled with laughs. She held the lapel of her garment tightly with her hands, as if she was playing hard to get.

Shen Wei laughed broadly. "I've wanted you for so long. You can't get away today!"

At that very moment, Song Li slowly removed one hand from her chest, and her green awl suddenly shot out of her sleeve.

PUFF!

In the next moment, the awl pierced into Shen Wei's neck, and then its sharp tip went out the back of his neck.

Shen Wei's eyes were bulging and wide open as he stopped breathing, looking extremely shocked and confused.

Loathing filled Song Li's face as she pushed Shen Wei's corpse away. "You're no different from Yin Tuo and the other two, dumbass!"

She rose to her feet and spit on the corpse's face, saying, "How can I allow a piece of garbage like you to touch me?!"

She bent down to pull her awl out of the corpse's neck. As she did, she maneuvered her wrist, and the head was severed from the body.

In a location far away, a shudder ran through Nie Tian's body as he observed them via his Heaven Eyes as he recovered his strength with spirit stones.

## Chapter 289: Playing a Game

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“A toad lusting after a swan’s flesh!” Song Li cursed, looking at Shen Wei’s severed head with disgust filling her face, as if she had put up with Shen Wei for a long time and finally found a vent.

At that moment, her pretty face was filled with coldness, and not a smidgen of delicate charm could be seen.

She bent down and took Shen Wei’s bracelet of holding, along with Yin Tuo and the other two’s. Only after that did she smile lightly. “At least my gains on this trip have been pretty good.”

Then, she took out a prismatic Sound Stone, held it close to her mouth, and whispered something into it.

Afterwards, she sat down and started recuperating with spirit stones.

What she didn’t know was that Nie Tian had already seen everything she had done via his Heaven Eyes.

At a location far away, Nie Tian opened his eyes and said with a grim expression, “Song Li!”

He had long since had the feeling that this woman had been hiding something. After all, she had been the one who had urged everyone to march deeper into the dense forest and hunt high grade spirit beasts.

Lu Yan had been strongly opposed to her proposal, and thus she had been kicked off the team.

During their most recent battle with the Golden Stone Rhino, Nie Tian had noticed the exchange of glances between her and Shen Wei via his Heaven Eyes. That was when he had first speculated that Song Li and Shen Wei had been planning together.

However, he had never expected that, soon after he had left them, Song Li would kill Shen Wei when he attempted to be intimate with her.

Shen Wei's death made Nie Tian realize that even Shen Wei had been used by Song Li, and had been part of her plan.

Nie Tian couldn't help but look back to examine himself. He thought to himself that if it weren't for his Heaven Eyes, he might have been murdered by the woman without even knowing it.

With those thoughts, a rush of coldness ran through Nie Tian's body.

He realized that even though he was strong enough that he wouldn't be killed by the Golden Stone Rhino, she would have come up with more evil ideas and eventually get him killed.

If he possessed strength that matched his own cultivation base, he would have been killed already, just like Yin Tuo and the other

two cultivators.

“The Void Illusion Mountain Range is truly a dangerous place where people are especially deadly...!”

With a cold look in his eyes, Nie Tian sprung to his feet and marched towards Song Li’s location.

The fact that Song Li had remained in that location after killing Shen Wei made it clear that she was recovering her strength and waiting for him to return.

Nie Tian was curious as to how she would explain Shen Wei’s death.

Furthermore, he wanted to know if Song Li was waiting to kill him as well, or if she had other plans.

As he stepped closer, Song Li sensed his footsteps.

When he was still 1,000 meters away from her, Nie Tian noticed that the tip of one of her eyebrows rose, as if she knew it was him.

“What? This guy returned so fast this time...” Song Li muttered to herself, her face cold and indifferent.

Apparently, she didn’t feel the need to hide her true colors when no one was around.

At this moment, she was true to her heart and the real Song Li.

With a disgusted look in her eyes, she glanced at Shen Wei's headless body before she raised her hand and grasped at the air. In the next moment, a stream of blood flew out of the corpse's cut-open neck and into her palm, forming a ball of blood.

With a grim expression, she smeared the blood on her milky white neck, the corner of her mouth, and her full chest.

She was apparently very uncomfortable having her clean battle garments and jade-like skin stained by Shen Wei's blood. Eyebrows knit together, she cursed in a soft voice.

However, when Nie Tian appeared in her sight, she had already assumed a completely different attitude, like she had become a different person.

She sat in a pool of blood, a helpless look filling her face. Tears flowed out of the corners of her eyes and rolled down her cheeks as she shook her head and wept towards Shen Wei's corpse, "Why? Why did you have to do this? You already had everything. Why did you still not let me off?"

"Ah?!" Nie Tian exclaimed loudly. "Big Brother Shen is dead?!"

Song Li lifted her chin to look at Nie Tian. Looking extremely pitiful, she said, "Soon after you left, he suddenly changed and

demanded that I hand over everything I have so that he could go back to Shatter City and purchase the spiritual tool he had set his mind on. I-I handed him my bracelet of holding, but then he... wanted to force himself on me.

“While I struggled I killed him by accident. I didn’t want this to happen... He forced me!”

Song Li’s tone suddenly grew strong, as if she was losing control of her emotions. She yelled miserably at Nie Tian, “Li Tian, why would Big Brother Shen do this?!! Even though there are only the three of us now, we were still a strong team. We could have kept hunting spirit beasts and gotten what he needed. Why would he do that to me?!!”

Nie Tian let out a cold snort and then said with a consoling soft voice, “Shen Wei is such a cold-blooded monster! His death should not be regretted! Sister Song, you shouldn’t be heartbroken for a man like him. He’s not worth it.”

With these words, he walked to Song Li’s side and said, with his face filled with pity, “Alright, alright, without him, we can still go and hunt spirit beasts. The two of us might need to spend more effort. That’s all.”

“Mmm.” Song Li nodded briefly. “I haven’t gotten to recover my strength, and I was injured when I tangled with Shen Wei. I’m afraid I can’t even stand by myself now. Can you help me to my feet, Li Tian?”



Nie Tian gnashed his teeth as he reached out to Song Li, saying, “Shen Wei is such a monster in human form!!”

Song Li rose to her feet with Nie Tian’s help. Her body trembled and swayed, as if she truly had difficulty standing.

All of a sudden, she fell into Nie Tian’s chest.

Nie Tian naturally put his arms around her.

Song Li’s hands went under Nie Tian’s arms and circled around Nie Tian’s broad back, her whole body pressing tightly against Nie Tian.

Her chin was placed on Nie Tian’s shoulder as she sobbed, “I didn’t know Shen Wei was that kind of person. He betrayed my trust and respect for him. Not only did he take all my valuables, but he even wanted to...”

With two of them in such a position, Nie Tian couldn’t see her face. In fact, as she sobbed and spoke in a tender voice, the pitiful look on her face had already vanished. What had taken its place was coldness and killing intent.

However, Nie Tian had long since clamped her arms with his own, not giving her arms any room to move.

Previously, her green awl had shot out of her right sleeve and killed Shen Wei. In light of that, Nie Tian paid extra attention and

guarded against that move.

Nie Tian kept track of the movements of her arms. Whenever she attempted to struggle free, Nie Tian would clamp her arms harder, forcing her arms to remain where they were.

In the meantime, Nie Tian told her not to get angry with a consoling tone, and used his hands to gently stroke her back, as if he was trying to calm her.

“Sister Song, don’t get angry for a man like him. It’s not worth it.” Nie Tian’s tone grew increasingly soft and consoling. “That bastard just wanted your body, but not you as a person. But I...”

With those words, Nie Tian’s hands slowly slid down and reached Song Li’s full, bouncy buttocks. “I liked you the moment I saw you. My feelings for you are real. Seeing you with that bastard made my heart hurt like hell. I can’t wait any longer!” It appeared that as Nie Tian’s emotions grew stronger, he groped Song Li’s butt forcefully with his large hands.

It pained her so much that she called out, “Ahh!” Her face grew stiff, and the killing intent in her eyes was so intense that she could have an outburst any moment.

However, whenever she attempted to move her arms, she felt that she was being pressed down by a strong counterforce.

“Y-you’re hurting me, Li Tian.” Even though she was gritting her

teeth, and her face looked sullen, her voice was still filled with a maiden's shyness. "Bad kid, I can't believe that you're just like Shen Wei and also hold those kinds of intentions towards me."

"You can't say that!" Nie Tian pretended to be angered by her words. He vigorously grabbed her butt again and said, "In all honesty, my feelings for you are real, and I don't ever want to be separated from you! How can you say that I'm the same as that bastard?!"

His voice was full of emotions, but his eyes were as calm as lake water. Meanwhile, his hands kept rubbing Song Li's round butt without pausing for a moment.

At that moment, Nie Tian felt that Song Li was attempting to take out her sharp awl. With a vigorous move of his hands, he pressed Song Li towards himself, forcing her body to stick closely to his own.

"Hmm..." Eyes wide, Song Li felt as if her arms had been completely locked down by iron vices.

At this moment, not the slightest room was left between Nie Tian's chest and Song Li's ample breasts, which were flattened due to the excessive pressure.

Nie Tian's eyes shone with the light of clarity. He rapidly discovered that Song Li's green awl was still hidden within her right sleeve.

Therefore, he clenched her right arm with his left arm as he created a certain distance between the two of them.

Upon seeing this, Song Li hastily masked the cold killing intent in her eyes.

Since she hadn't expected that Nie Tian would suddenly make such a move, she almost exposed her true facial expression.

At that moment, Nie Tian looked down into her eyes. His eyes were filled with deep affection as his breath grew heavier. "Sister Song! Promise me that we'll be together!"

Song Li looked up at him with a somewhat panicked expression, and said, "I-I'm not ready for this. Let go of me and give me some time to think, will you?"

Her right arm was still tightly clamped by Nie Tian, so their faces were still rather close to each other.

After hearing her evasive answer, Nie Tian blurted loudly, "No! I want your answer right now! I want you to be my woman!"

## Chapter 290: Utter Humiliation

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With these words, Nie Tian lifted his freed right hand and reached towards Song Li's towering breasts, which he groped without any scruples.

“Wait! Don't! Let go of me, Li Tian! Give me some time to think!” Song Li sounded rattled.

“No! I want your answer right now!” Nie Tian assumed a look as if he was crazy in love.

Song Li, who had practically been touched all over by Nie Tian, struggled to stop her throbbing killing intent from erupting.

She thought she would be able to enchant and kill Nie Tian effortlessly, just like she had Shen Wei, Yin Tuo, and the others.

Never had she expected that she would end up in such a bad situation.

The reason she had chosen not to store her awl in her bracelet of holding was so that she could launch the fatal strike when her target had his guard down.

If she had stored her spiritual tool in her bracelet of holding, when she summoned it, the bracelet of holding would shine with bright light, thus alarming her target.

She had killed numerous people with this method, including Shen Wei, and not once had she missed. All it had taken was one strike.

She had never expected that the seemingly unimpressive Nie Tian would be so hard to deal with.

Every time she wanted to withdraw her right hand to use her spiritual tool, she would feel a strong restrictive force from Nie Tian's arm.

After a few attempts, Song Li gradually began to suspect that Nie Tian was only acting to be in love with her and was actually playing with her. "This little bastard! Can he be using his affection for me as an excuse to take advantage of me?"

The more Song Li thought about it, the more it made sense to her. Otherwise, why would she be met with such strong resistance every time she tried to move her arm?

She finally could no longer suppress her rage that had been building up for a quite some time.

At that moment, Nie Tian, who had been looking down at her since the beginning, immediately noticed the change in her facial expression.

Song Li slowly moved her unrestrained left hand towards Nie Tian's chest while subtle spiritual power fluctuations were born

inside of her and quietly passed through her meridians to her left hand.

Seemingly anxious to get an answer from Song Li, Nie Tian shouted again, “Answer me, Sister Song!”

At the same time, Nie Tian’s hand, which he had placed on Song Li’s left breast, suddenly tightened.

Song Li instantly let out a miserable scream.

This scream wasn’t acting at all, but a spontaneous reaction from the excruciating pain.

She felt as if her left breast had been almost crushed by Nie Tian’s hand.

BOOM!

The cluster of spiritual power on Song Li’s left hand seemed to be suddenly disturbed, and exploded before Song Li’s hand could reach Nie Tian’s chest.

Nie Tian, who was supposed to be the target, laughed wildly as he jumped backwards, putting a significant distance between Song Li and himself.

Song Li, however, lost control of her spiritual power due to the

heart-wrenching pain, and was sent staggering backwards by the explosion. She yelled, “Li Tian! You damn bastard! I’ll break your bones and flay you alive! And then I’ll whip your corpse for seven days!”

Song Li, who had broken free from Nie Tian’s restriction, had one hand on her left bosom, which hurt so much that tears rolled down her face. Without the slightest hesitation, she summoned her green awl and bolted towards Nie Tian like she had gone crazy.

At that moment, she was completely convinced that Nie Tian had been playing with her the entire time, and humiliated her under the guise of his love for her.

Ever since she was a child, she had been good at manipulating and tricking others. She had killed numerous men who had drooled over her beauty with similar methods.

Not once had she ever been insulted like this.

Separated from her, Nie Tian still looked at her lovingly and said with a frustrated tone, “Sister Song, my love for you is real! Why do you want to kill me?!”

However, in the meantime, Nie Tian had already secretly formed a chaotic magnetic field around himself and a spiritual energy ball with the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

BOOM!



The spiritual energy ball left Nie Tian's hand and exploded in before reaching Song Li.

Numerous multicolored, bright spots that contained different types of filth and impurities were shot in every direction.

Song Li charged madly towards Nie Tian like a female tiger, baring her fangs and brandishing her claws.

However, she soon sensed danger from the colorful bright spots. She immediately came to a stop, gathered her spiritual power, and formed a bright light shield around her alluring physique.

FIZZ! FIZZ!

As the bright spots rained down from midair and onto her light shield, numerous fiery sparks were created at the contact points.

Song Li could feel her protective shield being corroded by the spots of impurities. Her face was grim and her eyes were filled with hatred as she yelled, "Li Tian! Enough acting! I've already seen through your tricks!"

"That's not true! I love you from the bottom of my heart. Yet, you turned me down." Bitterness and sorrow stretched across Nie Tian's face. "Not only do you refuse to accept my love, but you even want to kill me! I can only defend myself."

With those words, a second spiritual energy ball flew above Song Li's head and exploded.

The sputtering bright spots and the aftermath of the explosion continued to deal damage to Song Li's light shield, making it flicker continuously. Song Li had to infuse it with more spiritual power to prevent it from exploding.

Outraged, Song Li shouted, "Shut the hell up! I don't want to hear another word from you!"

"You betrayed my love, Sister Song." With these words, Nie Tian shot out a third spiritual energy ball. "With all seriousness, I fell in love with you the moment I saw you!" The spiritual energy ball exploded above Song Li.

"Just now, we were so close to each other, and I could tell that you had feelings for me too." A fourth spiritual energy ball was formed and shot towards Song Li.

"We'll make a great couple. You just need time to think about it. Now I'll give you the time to think. I hope your answer is 'yes'."

Nie Tian kept forming spiritual energy balls and used them to bombard Song Li as he poured out his feelings towards her.

Standing in the middle of her light shield, Song Li was so enraged that she couldn't stop trembling. She wished she could charge through the mist of bright spots and eat Nie Tian alive.

Every word that came out of Nie Tian's mouth was extremely humiliating to her, telling her that Nie Tian had been having his fun with her the entire time.

The hatred and rage in her heart continued to build up as Nie Tian went on and on.

At the same time, she was rapidly consuming her spiritual power to maintain her protective light shield.

The only thing on her mind right now was to use the awl in her hand to poke a hundred holes in Nie Tian.

She had never hated someone so much.

"Hmm?" All of a sudden, Nie Tian, who was still casting more spiritual energy balls, sensed via one of his Heaven Eyes that a tall male Qi warrior was charging directly towards this part of the forest at full speed.

His aura was very familiar. After a brief search in his mind, Nie Tian realized that it was the Greater Heaven stage expert who had killed the team of three explorers.

"It's him!" Nie Tian's expression flickered slightly.

"I've still got business to attend to. Excuse me, Sister Song." With

a sigh, he added, “but I want you to remember that my love for you is real and will never change! I hope that, next time we meet, you’ll have considered my proposal, and you can accept me! See you soon!”

With those words, Nie Tian immediately turned around and ran off like a bolt of lightning.

Song Li’s scream rang out from behind his back, “Li Tian! I dare you to stay a little longer!!”

The area she was in had been drowned by bright spots that carried all kinds of impurities. Even though she wanted to, she couldn’t burst out of there and chase after Nie Tian.

She could only watch as Nie Tian ran further and further away until he eventually disappeared from her sight.

A cold smile could be seen on Nie Tian’s face. “I’m afraid that we won’t get to see each other ever again.”

From what he could tell, the Greater Heaven stage expert was probably one of the Hunters who lurked in the depths of the dense forest.

Considering that Song Li had consumed a significant amount of her strength, the expert would be able to send her on her way to the netherworld without breaking a sweat.

Although Nie Tian was running further and further away from Song Li, he commanded his Heaven Eyes to remain there to see how she would die.

It wasn't long before the tall Qi warrior appeared in the area where Nie Tian had fought Song Li.

To Nie Tian's surprise, the moment he showed up, he swooped towards Song Li, but he didn't aim to kill her.

On the contrary, eyes filled with panic and anxiety, he hastily cast spells to shoot out sizable beams of spiritual power, which swam about in the area and rapidly removed all the toxic impurities for Song Li.

"Are you alright, miss? What happened?" The man asked anxiously.

As soon as the area was purged, Song Li dropped to the ground and couldn't stop panting. When the man approached her, she swung her arm and slapped the man on his face, saying, "What took you so long?!" She vented her rage towards Nie Tian on the man.

After being slapped by Song Li, the man seemed even more terrified as he hastily got down on one knee and admitted, "Sorry, it's my fault!"

Fuming with rage, Song Li said loudly, "A man named Li Tian

just ran away from here. I want you to chase him down and bring him back to me! But remember! Don't kill him. I want him alive!"

"Miss, you seem to be in a rather bad situation. Should I stay here until you recover your strength?" The man worried about Song Li's safety.

"Get the hell out of here!" Song Li scolded. "And bring me back that Li Tian person!"

"Yes, miss!" The man sprang to his feet and sped off in the direction Song Li had pointed out for him.

"Li Tian! You won't be able to get away! I'll flay you alive!!!" After the man left, Song Li took out her green awl and stabbed Shen Wei's corpse a few dozen times. Only after seeing that it had become a bloody mess did she stop.

She took a deep breath to calm herself before opening her collar and looking down.

Her milky-white, ample bosoms were covered in finger-shaped bruises, which were like tattoos on her originally immaculate, jade-like breasts. It was a startling scene.

It wasn't hard for her to imagine what her butt looked like at this moment, since she could still feel the pain in her butt as she sat on the ground.

Those distinct finger-shaped bruises were like numerous slaps on Song Li's face. She had never been so humiliated.

Trembling, Song Li threw her head back and let out an ear-piercing shriek, "Li Tian!"

# Chapter 291: New Findings

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Via his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian heard the conversation between Song Li and the Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior with great clarity.

“Damn! They’re together!” At that moment, he realized that Song Li was also a Hunter, and apparently rather lofty among their organization.

Using his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian had determined that the tall Qi warrior was at the middle Greater Heaven stage.

With his strength, he didn’t need to worry about being confronted by anyone as long as he steered clear of the most powerful experts from the Dark Moon, Wild Fire, and Blood Skull.

However, he didn’t even dare to say a word when he was slapped by Song Li. This was enough to prove Song Li’s lofty status.

“Now that this evil woman has made me her sworn enemy, I’ve got to be more careful.” Frowning, he swiftly changed his path as he traveled at a fast speed into the depths of the dense forest, not leaving a clear trail for his pursuer.

He was aware that, considering his current cultivation base, if he only ran in open spaces, perhaps he wouldn’t be able to get away from the Greater Heaven stage Hunter.

Fortunately, this dense forest was filled with giant trees that



reached into the heavens along with high grade spirit beasts that would show up from time to time.

As familiar as the Hunter was with this forest, Nie Tian was able to circle around and lose him with the help of his seven Heaven Eyes and the complicated terrain.

An hour later, Nie Tian could no longer sense the Hunter who had been chasing after him.

He examined his surroundings again using his Heaven Eyes and was convinced that he was safe now.

During the following days, he kept running further and further away from the area where he had fought Song Li. He steered clear of high grade spirit beasts with the help of his Heaven Eyes, and stopped in safe regions to recover.

He would consume large amounts of the fourth grade spirit beast meat he had stockpiled and feed the rich flesh power to the green aura in his heart.

During the day, he would channel spiritual power from spirit stones and spiritual materials of different attributes to his spiritual sea to gradually push the limits of its capacity.

During the night, he would channel starlight from the countless stars in the heavens and form star power.

As a result, his spiritual sea gradually expanded and his spiritual power became more refined every day. Only the speed at which he condensed stardew was relatively slow.

One night...

Nie Tian, who had assumed the lotus position on a thick tree branch protruding from a tall tree, stopped cultivating and looked up into the infinite, starry sky.

The starlight that had been pouring down from the heavens rapidly dispersed. With a frown, he whispered to himself, "This method of gathering star power and condensing stardew is still too slow. The peculiar stones I previously used to restore star power were probably mined from or discovered in the Void Illusion Mountain Range as well. I just don't know where to look."

Pei Qiqi had bought him some peculiar stones in Shatter City and he had looted some more from the Dark Moon members he had killed.

Those stones had allowed him to condense stardew at a much faster speed, and thus greatly benefited his studying of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

Unfortunately, he had already used all of them the last time he had studied the Starstrike magic.

Without those stones, Nie Tian wondered if he should start

learning the Starshift.

After all, once he received enlightenment and mastered the magic, he would have to use stardew to practice.

The replenishment of stardew could only be done through night after night of channeling starlight from the heavens.

That was why he was hesitant to do it.

He sighed. “If I can find more of those stones, I’ll be able to condense copious amounts of stardew within a very short time. Then, I’ll be able to study the Starshift without any scruples.”

Recently, he had attached great significance to the cultivation of the green aura in his heart and the study of Fragmentary Star Incantation.

For the green aura to transform and advance to the next level, he would only need to continue to absorb flesh power. Since he had obtained the meat of numerous second and third grade spirit beasts, along with the Blood Eye Crocodile’s and the Golden Stone Rhino’s meat, he wouldn’t need to worry that he would run out of resources anytime soon. All he needed to do was consume meat every day and provide the green aura with rich flesh power.

What truly bothered him was that since he condensed stardew too slowly, it held up his study of the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

While he was wallowing in frustration, he heard a sharp scream via one of his Heaven Eyes. “Hmm?!”

It was the kind of sound people made when they died.

The source of the scream was beyond the sight of that Heaven Eye, so Nie Tian would need to move in that direction to get a clearer view of what was happening.

Therefore, he jumped off the tree.

As he moved closer to the source of the scream, that Heaven Eye of his floated to the site within a rather short time.

“Lu Yan!” Even though Nie Tian was still quite far from the site, he saw a familiar figure via his Heaven Eye: Lu Yan, who had quit Shen Wei’s hunting team.

Right next to her, a dead Shadow Eagle was lying on the ground, along with seven dead human Qi warriors, who were all dressed differently.

The faces of the dead Qi warriors were all grayish-green. From the look of it, they had died from some deadly poison.

Lu Yan was the only one alive. She took the seven Qi warriors’ bracelets of holding one by one and then cut off the valuable parts

of the Shadow Eagle with a sharp knife.

At the middle Heaven stage, Lu Yan was plain-looking and slightly chubby. Compared to the sultry Song Li, she didn't seem attractive at all.

However, she had parted ways with the team because she didn't want to go deeper into the forest. Why would she show up here?

Confused, Nie Tian quietly marched towards Lu Yan's location while she cut the valuable parts off the Shadow Eagle, hoping he could obtain the Shadow Eagle's meat from her.

From what he could tell, Lu Yan was far weaker than Song Li.

Furthermore, she probably wouldn't want the Shadow Eagle's meat, so she might just be willing to give it to him for free. If she wasn't, he was also prepared to take it by force.

He had adjusted to the cruel rules of the Void Illusion Mountain Range, and was prepared to act by them.

However, just as he quietly approached Lu Yan, he noticed via one of his Heaven Eyes that another early Greater Heaven stage expert was rapidly closing in on her as well.

That man seemed to be another Hunter!

Nie Tian immediately stopped to observe the situation.

Moments later, the man appeared in front of Lu Yan. He took a glance at her and then the dead Shadow Eagle before he said with a smile, “It seems that it’s your lucky day.”

“Yeah, I secretly poisoned these seven fools. Just after they killed the Shadow Eagle, the poison began to show its effect and killed them.” Lu Yan chatted with the man, seemingly rather comfortable. Suddenly, she frowned and asked, “Is there still no word of that Li Tian person?”

With a worried look on his face, the man sighed. “No, there isn’t. Our brothers have been searching in the vicinity for days, but there seems to be no trace of him.

“I wonder what that bastard did to offend Lady Song Li. She has been very grumpy lately, and many brothers have suffered because of it.”

“I’ve met that Li Tian person. He’s only an early Heaven stage young man who has a Blood Skull guest elder’s identity medallion.” With a deep frown, Lu Yan added, “As resourceful as Lady Song Li is, killing a man like him should be as easy as pie. How could she have suffered a loss from him?”

The man shook his head as he let out a cold harrumph and said, “It beats me, but if I ever get to see that bastard, I’ll capture him and give him a taste of the cruelest torture! I can’t believe he actually dared to offend Lady Song Li. Even death cannot atone for

his crime!”

Lu Yan sighed. “Now that she is still furious, I’d better not go see her, in case she vents her anger on me. When I’m done with this Shadow Eagle, I’ll go back and lure another exploration team here, and keep up the work.”

“Yeah, that’s probably a smart choice,” The man said, looking rather helpless. “I’m not as lucky as you are. I’ll have to bear with her temper. Many brothers have been slapped on the face. She called us good-for-nothings for failing to find that bastard after searching for so long.”

Lu Yan and the man chatted as they looted all the valuable parts of the Shadow Eagle together. Then, Lu Yan handed what she had to the man, along with the seven bracelets of holding, before they both left.

Hiding from a safe distance, Nie Tian heard every word of their conversation.

“I can’t believe Lu Yan and Song Li are together on this! Those two evil women echoed each other and lured Shen Wei and others into their traps. I’ve never seen the two of them communicate in private. It means that they must have reached a mutual understanding long ago and they didn’t even need to talk...” After unearthing the truth, Nie Tian finally understood how these Hunters worked.

Women like Song Li and Lu Yan would sway and lure exploration

teams to march into the depths of the dense forest, where they thought they would hunt spirit beasts together, but would actually be butchered before they knew it.

From the look of it, these Hunters must have been doing this for a long time.

By taking out spirit beasts and the exploration teams together, the Hunters could maximize their gains.

The way Hunters did business was even more evil and despicable than the Wild Fire, Dark Moon, and Blood Skull.

“These ruthless Hunters...” Nie Tian was shocked into a sweat by these thoughts, realizing that if he hadn’t had the Heaven Eyes, he probably would have fallen prey to them as well.

Just now, if he hadn’t discovered the appearance of the Greater Heaven stage expert, he might have sneaked up on Lu Yan already, and at that time, it wouldn’t have been easy for him to get away.

Nie Tian waited for a while. Only when he was convinced that Lu Yan and that other man were truly gone did he march over and collect the Shadow Eagle’s meat and blood.

Afterwards, he frowned as he pondered whether he should keep gathering high grade spirit beast meat in the forest or leave as soon as possible.



According to Lu Yan and that other man, Song Li, who was a high ranking official among the Hunters, had already arranged for her men to search for him everywhere.

If he stayed, he would probably be discovered sooner or later.

If it came down to that, he would be facing more than one Hunter.

After a moment of contemplation, Nie Tian let out a snort and said, “I’ll play with you for a few more days and see if you can catch me in this dense forest!”

## Chapter 292: Spoiling Their Plans!

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During the next few days, Nie Tian roamed about in the deepest parts of the dense forest and played hide and seek with Song Li's subordinates with the help of his Heaven Eyes.

In the meantime, he discovered several exploration teams which had been lured into the depths of the forest by women like Song Li and Lu Yan via his Heaven Eyes.

At first, Nie Tian just followed them and didn't do anything.

When they killed high grade spirit beasts and left with their valuable parts, he would quietly sneak up and harvest the spirit beasts' meat and blood.

Just like that, he obtained the meat and blood of five fourth grade spirit beasts in ten days.

That was when he reckoned that the meat and blood he had in his possession was enough to last him quite some time...

During these days, Hunters who answered to Song Li never stopped searching for Nie Tian.

Nie Tian encountered them several times.

However, every time Nie Tian sensed their presence in the

vicinity via his Heaven Eyes, he would immediately change his route to avoid them.

Since Qi warriors who hadn't entered the Worldly realm hadn't upgraded their psychic power to soul power, they weren't able to hide themselves under Nie Tian's Heaven Eyes.

Furthermore, the Heaven Eyes contained soul power, which meant that those Heaven and Greater Heaven stage Qi warriors weren't able to sense their existence.

Therefore, he had come close to being discovered by Hunters on several occasions, but he had never truly been in danger.

During the day, he had also stopped to consume spirit beast meat to meet the green aura's endless demand for flesh power whenever he had the opportunity.

At night, he would focus on channeling star power into his vortex of star power and condensing stardew.

He had put the expansion of his spiritual sea on hold. He stopped using spirit stones to enrich his spiritual power, along with refining his vortex of flame power and vortex of wood power with the relevant spiritual materials.

From what he could tell, those things could wait until he returned to Shatter City, where he would be able to use the Blood Skull's cultivation room and develop his spiritual sea more

efficiently.

Spiritual materials of the fire attribute and wood attribute could also be found fairly easily in Shatter City.

However, stardew could only be formed in the Void Illusion Mountain Range. Therefore, he spent most of his time and energy condensing and building up stardew in his vortex of star power.

Knowing that he had already stockpiled enough spirit beast meat, Nie Tian no longer followed exploration teams that had been tricked into marching into the depths of the forest. Instead, he warned them of their situation and sabotaged the Hunters' plans.

One day, a team of eight members was traveling in the heart of the forest. The man in the forefront suddenly caught sight of a few lines of words carved in the bare trunk of an ancient tree.

He stepped closer and rapidly gleaned an important message from the words on the tree trunk.

After he finished reading the message, the man instantly spun around and called out, pointing at a plain-looking woman on their team, "Take her! Check her bracelet of holding and see if she's a Hunter!"

Nie Tian had left the message on the tree trunk, informing the team of the Hunters' plans and how they had plotted against teams like theirs.

The plain-looking woman's face turned pale the moment she heard the team leader's order.

Before the other team members could react, she swiftly shifted her position as she dashed off into the distance.

“Go get her!” the man shouted. “She’s a Hunter and she lured us here to kill us! When we’re done with spirit beasts, her Hunter friends will show up and swamp us!”

During the following days, Nie Tian left messages for similar scammed teams in different parts of the dense forest.

Most of the time, the team leaders were smart enough to realize the authenticity of the messages.

More often than not, they were able to catch and kill the undercover Hunter. Even if they didn't, they would rapidly withdraw from the heart of the forest, lest they became open targets for the Hunters.

...

Next to an ancient tree stood Song Li, who had already recovered her strength. Dressed in short battle garments, she looked extremely curvaceous and desirable. However, the expression on her face was as cold as ice.

Eyes emanating an icy aura, she stared at the words carved in the tree trunk. She gritted her teeth and her ample bosom couldn't stop trembling.

The few Greater Heaven stage Hunters around her remained silent and also looked rather grim.

“Find out who did this!” Song Li roared.

She was the initiator, and thus was in charge of their operations in the heart of the forest.

It was her who had come up with this method, through which the Hunters would be able to obtain valuable parts of high grade spirit beasts and loot the belongings of exploration teams without breaking a sweat.

She thought their method was impeccable, and could be duplicated on many more exploration teams.

However, she had never expected that her method would be cracked by someone and unveiled to her potential prey, much less the fact that Nie Tian was the man who had left those warning messages.

“Yes, miss! We're on it!” one Greater Heaven stage Hunter hastily replied.

Song Li stamped with fury. “Good-for-nothing! You're all good-

for-nothings! With the whole lot of you, you can't even find the early Heaven stage Li Tian after searching for so many days! Now another man shows up and unveils our plan to whoever comes to the forest. You must have given away our plan due to your imprudence!"

"Sorry, miss! It's our fault!" The man said without thinking.

"Screw off!" Song Li shouted angrily. "Get the hell out of my sight, all of you! Bring me Li Tian and the guy who leaves those messages! I want them alive!"

The Hunters around her slowly shrank away from her and spread out to search for Nie Tian and the man who left the messages.

Three days passed...

Nie Tian couldn't see another exploration team in the dense forest.

Then, he realized that the teams that had withdrawn must have warned other teams on their way back.

The teams that were originally planning to explore the heart of the dense forest must have given up after learning about the Hunters' operations.

Some alerted exploration teams even caught the undercover Hunters on their teams and killed them, and thus causing the

Hunters more casualties.

During this period of time, he had also learned about the situation of the Dark Moon, Wild Fire, and Blood Skull from some of the teams by observing and listening to their conversations.

Numerous Dark Moon members had been chased down and killed by Blood Skull and Wild Fire members. Only Ma Jiu himself had managed to escape and flee back to their headquarters.

After learning that the battle between the Blood Skull and Dark Moon hadn't been a scramble for precious treasures, the Wild Fire called back their forces, putting an end to the fight among three major powers.

“It's about time I returned to Shatter City.” Nie Tian assumed that his business in the forest was finished, so he decided to leave.

However, he wanted to humiliate Song Li one last time before returning to Shatter City. Hence, he left a special message, which was discovered by one of the Hunters soon after he left.

...

The tall, middle Greater Heaven stage Hunter approached Song Li. He humbly bowed his head and said in a soft voice, “Miss, we've found something. You might want to come and take a look at it, although...”



Song Li suddenly became refreshed. “You’ve found traces of Li Tian? Or the one who spread the messages?”

“Neither...” The man looked very embarrassed. “It’s a message... I think you’d better come and see for yourself.”

“Alright,” Song Li said with a frown.

Before long, the tall Qi warrior led Song Li to the location where Nie Tian had left his last message.

It was another enormous tree. A line of words was carved out in its trunk, which read: Hey, slut Song Li, have fun looking for me. I’ve returned to Shatter City — Li Tian.

After reading the message, Song Li let out a hysterical, ear-piercing screech, “Li Tian!”

Trembling with rage, she thundered, “I can’t believe he did all this! Li Tian, I swear upon my life that I’ll kill you!”

The writing looked so familiar that she could tell at first glance that it was from the same man who had been sabotaging their plans recently!

It had been Nie Tian all along!

The fact that it was Nie Tian who had been undermining them

doubled Song Li's anger towards him. She couldn't wait to catch Nie Tian, torture him in every way she could imagine, and watch him die screaming.

“That guy is quite young, and only at the early Heaven stage. How in the world could he see through your well-arranged plan?” A Greater Heaven stage Hunter expressed his confusion.

Song Li looked coldly at him and said, “How should I know?! It must be you lot's incompetence that gave away our plan. Even my maidservant, Lu Yan, is dead because of it, and you can't even find him. How do you still have the nerve to question me?!”

“Sorry, miss! The fault is ours!” The man hastily apologized.

Song Li took a deep breath and forced herself to calm down. Then, she said, “Abort the forest-hunting mission! Li Tian is on his way back to Shatter City. From now on, your new mission is to capture him before he can get back to Shatter City!”

“If you let him return to Shatter City, we'll become a laughingstock to everyone!”

“Inform every brother and sister. Whatever you do, I need you to capture Li Tian before he returns to Shatter City!”

“Remember! I want him alive!”

“Yes, miss!”

## Chapter 293: The Fang

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In the Blood Skull's base in the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

After Pei Qiqi had recovered from her injuries, she hadn't spent any time looking for a suitable location to set up the teleportation portal. Instead, she went straight to the Blood Skull's base in the mountain range.

The reason why she had decided to leave as soon as possible was that, after the tempering she had received from her battles against Ma Jiu and Li Langfeng, she had a feeling that she was about to break through from the late Heaven stage into the Greater Heaven stage.

The advancement of her cultivation base was so crucial that she dared not do it in the perilous Void Illusion Mountain Range.

She planned to use the Blood Skull's teleportation portal to get back to Shatter City first, and then return to the mountain range to find a suitable location for her newly-acquired teleportation portal after entering the Greater Heaven stage.

After Nie Tian had left the secret stronghold, she didn't try to use the advanced communication spell formation to contact the Blood Skull because she was aware that the location of the secret stronghold under the creek was only supposed to be revealed to senior Blood Skull members.

Cai Yuan had broken their rules by revealing such important

information to her. She didn't want to get him in trouble.

When she showed up in the Blood Skull's base, it caused a stir among the Blood Skull members. Cai Yuan and Shi Qing soon heard about her return and rushed back to their base without any delay.

Seeing that she was in a good state, Cai Yuan smiled as his scrunched eyebrows finally relaxed. "It's nice to see that you're okay, Qiqi!"

During the past few weeks, Cai Yuan had organized a search team and gone to every corner of the mountain range to search for her. He had been worried sick that something bad might happen to her.

The feelings he had for Pei Qiqi were real.

"As soon as I learned that you escaped from Li Langfeng's pursuit, I knew that you would be fine," Shi Qing said with a smile. "Where's Hua Tian? Didn't he come back with you?"

At that moment, the Blood Skull's highest commander in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, Gu Yu, walked out from one of the wooden cottages and said, "According to our scouts, Li Langfeng is still searching for Hua Tian everywhere. I thought he was with you. Now you're here, where's Hua Tian?"

Back when the Blood Skull, Wild Fire, and Dark Moon had tangled with one another, Shi Qing had sent Cai Yue back to

Shatter City the first chance he had.

Afterwards, Shi Qing had explained the breathtaking battle between the three of them and Li Langfeng to Gu Yu in great detail.

After hearing Shi Qing's narration, Gu Yu, who had also thought it was a bit rash to offer a guest elder's identity medallion to an early Heaven stage young man, finally acknowledged Nie Tian's battle prowess.

He couldn't help but come to hold a high opinion of Nie Tian after hearing that the Heaven stage young man had fought Li Langfeng head-on and changed the course of the battle.

Later, he began to marvel at Nie Tian's strength when he heard from Cai Yuan that it was Nie Tian who had killed more than a dozen Dark Moon experts and rescued him and Pei Qiqi from Ma Jiu's siege.

As of that moment, both Shi Qing and Gu Yu realized that the Blood Skull was very fortunate to have made Nie Tian their guest elder.

The fact that Li Langfeng had been killing people to get Nie Tian's whereabouts also proved Nie Tian's outstanding ability.

After all, no ordinary person could offend and then survive that mad man.

“Hua Tian didn’t come back with me,” Pei Qiqi said with an expressionless face. “We lost Li Langfeng and found a secure location to recover our strength. Then we parted ways.”

Shi Qing seemed rather concerned as he asked, “Where did he go?”

Pei Qiqi frowned slightly as she recalled the determined expression on Nie Tian’s face when he had left her. “He went back to Shatter City on foot.”

“What?!” Gu Yu was greatly surprised. “He went back by himself? Didn’t he want to use our teleportation portal here? As a guest elder of the Blood Skull, he’s entitled to use our teleportation portals. He just needed to pay a few spirit stones. Why would he chose trouble over convenience and put himself in danger?!”

Cai Yuan’s expression also flickered. “He said he wanted to temper himself?!”

Pei Qiqi gently nodded towards him.

Standing in awe, Cai Yuan marveled, “I finally understand why Hua Tian is so powerful and resourceful! Even though he’s only at the Heaven stage, he voluntarily chose the most dangerous way to return to Shatter City. Hua Tian is indeed beyond ordinary!”

Cai Yuan seemed to approve of Nie Tian’s choice the most.

As Cai Lan's only son, he wouldn't just stay in Shatter City and be surrounded by wealth. Instead, he chose to venture in the Void Illusion Mountain Range year-round, and repeatedly put himself in desperate situations. By doing that, he tempered himself and won respect from all the Blood Skull members instead of relying only on his lofty identity.

"I'm tired and I need to recuperate," Pei Qiqi said, looking at the wooden cottage where the Blood Skull's teleportation portal was.

"No problem. I'll send you back." With these words, Cai Yuan led the way as the two of them walked into the cottage, where he arranged the teleportation for her.

Gu Yu and Shi Qing stood where they were.

The two Greater Heaven stage experts exchanged a glance and sighed.

"This Hua Tian kid is indeed beyond ordinary." Shi Qing said. "It's hard to imagine how powerful he will become after entering the Greater Heaven stage. Our young lord is truly visionary to have offered him a guest elder's identity medallion in advance."

Gu Yu nodded slightly before he suddenly frowned and said, "But the returning path he chose is full of danger. As you know, a new Hunter organization has appeared in recent years, and they roam the area between the Void Illusion Mountain Range and Shatter City. That organization seems to have appeared out of nowhere,

and doesn't seem to belong to the Realm of Split Void."

Shi Qing's eyebrows furrowed. "Are you talking about the Fang?"

Eyes narrowed, Gu Yu answered, "Yeah, exactly. I heard that their leader is a woman whose cultivation base seems to be unimpressive. However, she has a large number of Greater Heaven stage experts working for her. Our men encountered some Fang members in the Void Illusion Mountain Range before. Their strength was by no means weaker than our formal members'."

"Really?!" Shi Qing's face was filled with disbelief. "All the other Hunter organizations are not comparable to us, both in their battle prowess and spiritual tools. Why is this organization so special?"

"I've got a theory, but I can't prove it yet, so..." After a moment of pondering, Gu Yu continued, "It's probably safer for Hua Tian if he goes to Ash City or the Land of the Abandoned, instead of Shatter City. After all, if he goes back to Shatter City, it's very likely that he'll run into members of the Fang. I fear that he may not survive that encounter."

"You're right," Shi Qing said. "Although, I hope he can. If he can survive the Fang's ambush and pursuit and make it back to Shatter City alive, the kid will definitely grow into one of the biggest names in the Realm of Split Void!"

"That's my hope too." Gu Yu let out a sigh as he seemed to doubt that Nie Tian would succeed.



...

“The Fang!” At the same time, Nie Tian was mulling over the same name in a different corner of the mountain range.

He had long since left the dense forest and had already reached the outer edge of the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

It had been several days since he left Song Li that last message. During this time, he had met several withdrawing exploration teams, from whom he had learned about this Hunter organization.

Each and every exploration team had decided to abort their plan as soon as they had heard that the Hunter organization roaming in the depths of the forest was the Fang, even though many of them had Greater Heaven stage experts on their teams.

Through those teams, Nie Tian learned that the Fang was a Hunter organization that had just appeared in the Realm of Split Void, and they were very different from the other Hunter organizations.

They were extremely cruel and brutal; there would never be any survivors if they targeted an exploration team.

Not only that, but unlike other Hunter organizations, they wouldn't take in new members. Even though they captured powerful opponents who wished to join them, they would refuse their requests and kill them all the same.

Furthermore, they never communicated with other Hunter organizations.

No one knew anything about any of their members. It seemed as if the whole organization had appeared out of nowhere.

In addition, they were a highly structured organization. The few of their members who had been captured had refused to reveal any information about their organization even when facing death.

Up to this day, the only thing people knew about this mysterious organization was that their leader was a young woman.

...

The Fang had been the most discussed name among all the withdrawing exploration teams Nie Tian had encountered on his way back to Shatter City.

Every single one of them had prayed not to run into the Fang on their way back and hoped that the Fang wouldn't target their team.

It was as if they would never be able to make their way back to Shatter City once they were targeted.

Rubbing his chin, Nie Tian smiled bitterly. "Talk about luck...

The first and only Hunter organization I became enemies with turns out to be the Fang... I suppose Song Li is their leader then. From the look of it, if I want to return to Shatter City, my road ahead will be full of danger.”

With these thoughts in mind, he picked up his pace, using his seven Heaven Eyes to keep a close watch on everything in the vicinity.

Two days passed, and Nie Tian finally walked out of the Void Illusion Mountain Range...

As soon as he set foot on the hilly land, one of his Heaven Eyes caught sight of a bloody battle.

## Chapter 294: Sudden Strike

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A middle Heaven stage Qi warrior, who had a fang pattern embroidered on his left shoulder, was holding a portrait in one hand and clenching his other hand around a man's neck, as he asked the man with an expressionless face, "I'll ask you one last time: have you seen this man?"

The man shook his head. "N-no."

"Alright, you can die now." The Fang member crushed the man's neck as he shook his head.

"That Li Tian person might still be in the Void Illusion Mountain Range now," the other Fang member said, "Let's wait here for a little longer."

They were both at the middle Heaven stage, the same as the three men they had just killed.

However, it appeared as if they hadn't even broken a sweat killing those three enemies with just the two of them.

Failing to get what they wanted, the two Fang Qi warriors rolled up the vivid portrait of Nie Tian and put it away before beginning to loot the valuables from their three victims.

Meanwhile, a Heaven Eye that they couldn't detect floated high above their heads, hearing every word of their conversation.

In a location about a thousand meters away, Nie Tian frowned, as he had never expected that the moment he left the Void Illusion Mountain Range, he would run into Hunters from the Fang.

At this moment, both the Fang and Li Langfeng had set Nie Tian as their primary target. However, the Fang posed a bigger threat to him than Li Langfeng.

First of all, the Fang wasn't just one man, but rather a Hunter organization.

As the head of this tightly structured organization, Song Li was extremely smart and cunning. Even though she hadn't spent much time with Nie Tian, she was able to draw such an accurate portrait of him. Not only that, she worked so fast that it had already been passed to her subordinates in the hilly area and wasteland, and they had already started looking for Nie Tian according to it.

Li Langfeng, however, had been looking for Nie Tian merely based on the name Hua Tian, and he was just one man. Therefore, he was naturally not as efficient as the Fang.

Even though Nie Tian was surprised by the scene, he didn't seem anxious, since he had already prepared himself for this.

"Song Li, since you want to play, I'll play with you." Not only did Nie Tian not try to avoid them, but he even charged towards the two Fang members with a grin on his face.

From the look of it, he didn't attach much significance to those two middle Heaven stage Hunters.

He could tell that those Hunters were more powerful than common Qi warriors who came to explore the mountain range, but they didn't seem to be stronger than Dark Moon members of the same cultivation level.

Considering Nie Tian had killed more than a dozen middle Heaven stage Dark Moon members to rescue Pei Qiqi and Cai Yuan from a siege in the Void Illusion Mountain Range, it was natural that he didn't think much of them.

PHEW

Moments later, like a gust of wind, Nie Tian arrived in front of the two Hunters, who were stepping away from their victims.

Nie Tian's portrait had left a deep impression on the Hunters. Therefore, they were able to recognize him at first sight.

"Li Tian!!!" After realizing that the youngster in front of them was the man they had been looking for for days, they grew excited.

"I'm guessing you're looking for me," Nie Tian said, grinning, as he put away his jade bracelet and created a chaotic magnetic field around him.

At the same time, he raised his arms and cast the secret magic he had learned from the mysterious land.

A spiritual energy ball filled with concentrated impurities was instantly formed and shot towards the two Hunters.

**BANG!!!**

The energy ball exploded, sending out bright spots of various colors in every direction. The strong shock wave almost destroyed the two Fang members' protective light shields, making them flicker nonstop.

Every Qi warrior who dared to leave Shatter City, Ash City, and the Land of the Abandoned possessed elaborate spiritual tools that could resist the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth. Those two Hunters were no exception.

However, most spiritual tools could only ward off the normal toxic spiritual Qi, not the concentrated toxic spiritual Qi in Nie Tian's energy ball.

**CRACKLE! CRACKLE!**

The jade bracelets the two Hunters wore immediately exploded.

Expressions flickering dramatically, they had to summon their spiritual power to form new protective shields around them.

“The Realm of Split Void is a forbidden place for most life forms. However, it’s a blessed land for people like Pei Qiqi, Li Langfeng, and me.” With this thought, Nie Tian smiled heartily as he formed a second spiritual energy ball and used it to bombard his enemies.

Pei Qiqi was able to display the might of her profound spatial magics to the fullest here because spatial warps occurred here all the time and deadly spatial rifts could be found in every corner of the mountain range.

That was why the late Heaven stage Pei Qiqi had successfully killed Greater Heaven stage experts in the Void Illusion Mountain Range before.

As for Li Langfeng, who cultivated the art of poison, he was able to obtain useful toxins from the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.

Although he suffered a backlash from the toxins, he used them to build up his own strength and battle prowess.

As for Nie Tian, he could create spiritual energy balls by spending a limited amount of strength. Even though he couldn’t cultivate with the toxins within the highly concentrated spiritual energy balls, when he used them to bombard his enemies, they exhibited surprisingly formidable might.

Unlike Li Langfeng, most Qi warriors weren’t able to withstand the corrosion of the concentrated, toxic power.



BANG! BANG! BANG!

A row of spiritual energy balls exploded in succession, filling the air with multicolored bright spots, each of which carried deadly filth and impurities.

The two Fang members were soon engulfed, their spiritual energy shields struggling to resist the corrosion.

It wasn't very long before the light shields around them burst, and they were exposed to a mist of gorgeous lights, as well as various kinds of corrosive power.

In the next moment, they let out ear-piercing screams, but soon they gradually quieted down until they were finally silent.

When the bright spots completely dissipated, Nie Tian stepped towards the two Hunters and saw that their faces were grayish-green and their bodies were covered in faint green mist. Black blood was flowing out of every orifice in their faces, and their chests were welling, as if they could explode at any moment.

Their life auras were so weak that they seemed to be on the verge of dying.

“It seems that the truly powerful Hunters haven't showed up yet. I can't believe these two actually dared to stand in my way; morons who don't understand the immensity of this world.” Nie Tian

shook his head as he rapidly took their bracelets of holding, along with the bracelets of holding they had looted from their victims.

Just as he was walking away from them, the dead Hunters' bulging chests suddenly burst.

Nie Tian frowned as he heard the bursting sound. He couldn't help but marvel at Li Langfeng's strength. "The concentrated impurities are indeed fatally corrosive to human flesh, and not everybody can take it."

Back in the mountain valley, he had repeatedly bombarded Li Langfeng with his spiritual energy balls.

Li Langfeng had voluntarily deactivated his spiritual power shield and withstood the corrosive toxins within the countless multicolored lights with nothing but his fleshy body.

Even though he had been covered in bloody wounds, and looked rather bedraggled, he hadn't exploded and died.

On the contrary, after absorbing the concentrated impurities from Nie Tian's attacks, his battle prowess rose to another level.

After that battle against Li Langfeng, Nie Tian had realized that, as sickly as the man looked, the toughness of his fleshy body was actually not a bit weaker than the most powerful mutant spirit beasts in the Realm of Split Void!

Furthermore, the poisonous man was only one step away from entering the Worldly realm. Once he did, the Realm of Split Void would see another figure that even the three major forces would have to think twice about offending.

“I’d better avoid him before I enter the Greater Heaven stage,” Nie Tian said to himself.

He took out the map Pei Qiqi had given him. After taking a brief look at it, he got his bearings and sped off with seven Heaven Eyes floating around him.

A hour passed...

A Greater Heaven stage Hunter and two Heaven stage Hunters appeared.

With a glance at their two friends, who had died horrible deaths, their expressions became grim.

They had just come from the Void Illusion Mountain Range, where Song Li had ordered them to seek out and capture Nie Tian in the hilly region and wasteland.

The Greater Heaven Hunter circled around and examined the corpses before saying, “This is strange. They seem to have died from excessive corrosion of the tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth.”

“If that’s the case, they shouldn’t have died so miserably, right my lord?”

The Greater Heaven stage Hunter frowned, as he failed to figure out what had happened to them. “The residual tainted spiritual Qi of Heaven and Earth on them seems extremely intense, as if it had been concentrated. Only freaks like Li Langfeng are capable of doing that and making them die such horrible deaths.” Then, he took out a Sound Stone and reported his findings.

The coverage of a Sound Stone was limited, but a large number of Fang members were spread out in the region.

Therefore, his message reached Song Li after a few relays.

At that moment, Song Li had long since called off their forest-hunting mission and was rapidly marching towards the outer edge of the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

When she received the message, the tall middle Greater Heaven stage expert was standing right next to her.

Bitter hatred could be seen on her cold, beautiful face as she blurted, “It’s Li Tian again! Han Mu, you’re no stranger to his strange magic. He used the same magic to trap me in a mist of multicolored, toxic lights.”

Han Mu nodded softly and said, “Yeah, he sure had some strange skills. It must be him then, but it’s hard to believe that he has

already left the Void Illusion Mountain Range in such a short time. The fact that he has such mysterious skills at his disposal means that his true battle prowess surpasses his cultivation base.”

“Yeah. Otherwise, why would the Blood Skull offer him a guest elder’s identity medallion?” After a moment of pondering, Song Li said, “Tell everyone to be extra careful. Let them know that Li Tian’s cultivation base doesn’t do justice to his battle prowess! Tell them that he actually possesses the strength of a late Heaven stage cultivator!”

“Possessing the strength of a late Heaven stage cultivator when he’s only at the early Heaven stage...” Han Mu murmured with a concerned expression on his face. “If we allow this kid to return to Shatter City, he’ll become a source of endless trouble for us!”

“Isn’t it all because of you good-for-nothings?!” Song Li shouted angrily.

“Sorry, miss!” Han Mu hastily replied.

“Go all-out to get him then! Don’t waste another second in the Void Illusion Mountain Range!”

“Understood!”

# Chapter 295: Fame Spread Far and Wide!

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A few days passed...

Song Li and Han Mu had already left the Void Illusion Mountain Range and were traveling directly towards Shatter City at full speed.

Between the Void Illusion Mountain Range and Shatter City lay boundless hills and a wasteland. It would take a normal early Heaven stage cultivator two to three months to cross such a vast area and return to Shatter City.

It would take longer if they ran into Hunters and battled with them.

According to Song Li and Han Mu's assessment, even though Nie Tian's actual strength was far beyond a normal early Heaven stage cultivator's, it was still very unlikely for him to make it back to Shatter City within a short time.

After all, numerous Fang members were waiting for him on his way back to Shatter City. He would be forced to constantly change his direction and take detours to avoid them.

Another day passed...

Song Li and Han Mu found three dead Fang members at the foot of a short hill.

The three of them were all at the middle Heaven stage and skilled in attacking enemies together.

Even still, they had apparently died at Nie Tian's hands.

On the ground, next to their highly corrupted corpses, which were already highly corroded due to the concentrated toxins, was a message written in blood: Dumb woman, my real name is Hua Tian!

Under the glaring sun, the dried-up blood writing was a pain to Song Li's eyes.

“Hua Tian!” Song Li suddenly let out an ear-piercing scream, her curvaceous body trembling with anger and her wide eyes sprouting flames of rage.

Han Mu, however, didn't utter a word. He stared down at the sentence written in blood, face looking sullen.

Everyone knew that Li Langfeng had been looking everywhere in the Void Illusion Mountain Range for a young man named Hua Tian. It was no news to the Fang.

Li Langfeng had roamed about in the Void Illusion Mountain Range for years. Even the Fang always avoided conflict with him.

The fact that a young man had managed to escape from this wild poison master, who treated others' lives as dirt, had long since attracted the Fang's attention. Even more so, Li Langfeng hadn't been able to find him after searching for weeks.

However, Han Mu had never connected Hua Tian with the Li Tian they were looking for.

Until this moment...

Looking at the bloody words on the ground, he finally realized that the man they were looking for was none other than the Hua Tian Li Langfeng was so eager to kill.

After a moment of hesitation, he said, "Miss, I'm afraid this Hua Tian person isn't just an ordinary young man. According to the information we've gathered, he's very close to Pei Qiqi. Furthermore, he's the Blood Skull guest elder with the lowest cultivation base, which means someone lofty in the Blood Skull must attach great importance to him.

"Cai Lan of the Blood Skull and Pei Qiqi's master are both influential figures in the Realm of Split Void.

"If you anger them by killing this Hua Tian person, I fear that your major plan in the Realm of Split Void will be affected."

"So what are you saying?" Song Li asked with a cold tone.



Han Mu smiled embarrassedly and asked, “I can’t presume to know what Hua Tian did to offend you. But if it’s not so serious that he has to die for it, perhaps we can let it go this time. After all, some people must be secretly watching every move you’ve made ever since you came to the Realm of Split Void. I just think it’s not worth it to jeopardize your major plan just because of a single person.”

“Let it go?!” With a cold expression, Song Li slapped Han Mu vigorously on the face and said with a fierce tone, “That bastard has to die to atone for what he has done! I’d rather sacrifice my plan to kill him! I know that if I kill him, I’ll be making enemies of Pei Qiqi’s master and Cai Lan. So what?! Worst comes to worst, we’ll leave the Realm of Split Void!”

Surprisingly, Han Mu, who had been slapped on the face, didn’t seemed angered at all. He secretly observed and, after realizing that Song Li had made up her mind, no longer attempted to persuade her.

“I see! I’ll do everything within my power to catch him on his way back to Shatter City!” An intense killing aura burst forth from within Han Mu’s body.

“I won’t go back before Hua Tian is dead, not even if my plan doesn’t work out!” Song Li said loudly, her voice filled with hatred.

A few days passed...

During this period, Song Li informed all her Fang members via

Sound Stones to ignore other explorers who were on their way back to Shatter City and focus solely on searching for Nie Tian.

Not only that, she even communicated with other Hunter organizations for the first time, asking them to help her track down Nie Tian.

There were quite a few Hunter organizations that roamed the area between the Void Illusion Mountain Range and Shatter City. However, none of them were nearly as powerful as the Fang.

All their leaders feared and revered the Fang and Song Li a great deal, fearing that the Fang might take them out some day.

When they learned that Song Li wanted their help searching for a young man name Hua Tian, they were all very thrilled.

They even spent more time and effort than the Fang members; they mobilized every single member to cooperate with the Fang in search of Nie Tian, hoping they could please Song Li by doing so.

Just like that, every Hunter organization in the hills and wasteland spread out looking for Nie Tian.

Furthermore, numerous scrolls that carried the detailed portrait of Nie Tian's face were soon distributed to every Hunter organization. Countless bandits and outlaws now roamed about holding them.

With the massive search going on, all the exploration teams that returned from the Void Illusion Mountain Range were relieved from the potential ambushes.

They also heard that all the Hunter organizations were searching for a young man named Hua Tian on their way back to Shatter City.

Soon, Hua Tian became a famous name among both Hunters and explorers.

However, Nie Tian, who had been marked as a primary target by all the Hunter organizations, traveled among the hills and wastelands like an invisible ghost.

Not a single Hunter was able to locate and capture him.

On the contrary, the corpses of many early and middle Heaven stage Hunters were discovered in the wilderness, all of whom had died miserable deaths.

Meanwhile, the name “Hua Tian” was always written in blood on the ground next to them, holding the Fang and all those who dared to participate in the search in awe.

In the shadow of a hill.

A Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior was looking down at a line of bloody characters on the ground. His face was grim, and bulging

veins could be seen on his forehead.

He was the leader of the Blood Hand, a Hunter organization. Lying next to those bloody characters were four of his subordinates.

“All those who join the Fang’s operation shall die. – Hua Tian” Another Greater Heaven stage Blood Hand expert read the words and said with a frown, “Big Brother, this is already the second group of men we’ve lost. We’ve lost seven brothers now, but there’s still not a single word on that bastard’s whereabouts. He’s like a ghost that roams this boundless wasteland and launches sneak attacks on our brothers and other searching Hunters.

“We’re not the only ones. Other organizations have also suffered great losses.

“It doesn’t seem right to send our brothers on suicide missions just to please that woman from the Fang.”

With a very grim expression, the Blood Hand’s leader said, “You don’t think I know that?! Sure, this Hua Tian person is a pain in the neck, but that woman from the Fang is much worse! Hua Tian is only one person, but the Fang is filled with Greater Heaven stage villains.

“Considering their strength, they could easily wipe out all the other Hunter organizations, including us!

“This is exactly why we’ve been living in fear over the past two years.

“Now that we finally have an opportunity to please that woman and thus establish a close relationship with the Fang, how can we let it go?

“Also, if we don’t go all-out to help them, once that woman finds out, she’ll definitely pay us back.”

The Blood Hand’s leader sighed repeatedly with a helpless expression on his face.

“So do we keep searching?”

“Yeah, there’s no other choice!”

Several kilometers from where they were standing.

Shining brightly, five starsparks formed a mysterious formation before they flew towards a late Heaven stage Hunter.

BOOM!

The moment the Hunter was hit, his whole body exploded.

Nie Tian, however, stood unwavering with a cold expression on

his face, his robust, mountain-like body covered in fine wounds.

Three middle Heaven stage Hunters were lying at his feet. They all seemed to have been drowned and killed by the toxic bright spots from Nie Tian's spiritual energy balls.

"The ninth group!" The murderous intent in Nie Tian's eyes was so intense that he could almost kill people with it, and his entire body was wreathed in a strong bloody aura.

During the past few days, he had killed every Hunter he had encountered as long as they didn't have Greater Heaven stage experts on their search teams, regardless of whether they were with the Fang or other Hunter organizations.

He was holding a large cloth bag full of bracelets of holding, which made clanking sounds as he walked.

He bent down and grabbed the three bracelets of holding from the three corpses. Then, he sent a wisp of his psychic power into each of them. After a brief scan, he didn't find anything worth noting, so he tossed them into his large cloth bag.

Afterwards, he stepped towards the mangled body of his most recent victim and picked up his bracelet of holding.

After a brief examination of it, excitement appeared on Nie Tian's face.

He found a substantial amount of stones that had spots of starlight on them within that bracelet of holding.

The star power within those stones would be very helpful for him to condense stardew.

He had been looking for these kinds of stones for a long time. Never had he imagined that this late Heaven stage Hunter would have so many of them.

All the oddly-shaped stones were placed in a corner within the man's bracelet of holding, which meant that he hadn't attached much importance to them.

After a brief count, Nie Tian found that there were more than a hundred of them, which would be enough to satisfy his need for star power for a long time.

“This is awesome!”

With a thrilled expression on his face, Nie Tian transferred all of the stones into his own bracelet of holding before tossing the man's bracelet of holding into his large cloth bag.

“This Hunter is from an organization named Scorpion. Since he had a large number of those kinds of stones with him, does it mean that other members of the Scorpion may also have some?” With this thought in mind, he made this Hunter organization his new target.

Over the next few days, he didn't travel straight towards Shatter City. Instead, he roamed about in the Scorpion's territory and killed another two of their search teams

He obtained about two hundred more stones that contained star power from the Scorpion members he killed.

“When you're lucky, everything goes your way! The stones I've obtained from these people will last me for quite some time. Now I can go ahead and study the Starshift whenever I want!”



# Chapter 296: Strike Like a Shadow

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The Scorpion was only a second-class Hunter organization whose leader was a middle Greater Heaven stage Qi warrior.

Aside from their leader, they had two other senior members at the Greater Heaven stage, but that was it.

All the rest of their members were at the Heaven stage or even lower.

As weak as they were, they had multiple members hunted down and killed by Nie Tian, which made them even weaker.

Seeing that their own search teams were being wiped out by Nie Tian one after another, their leader had to seek help from the Fang.

Soon after he informed Song Li of their situation, Song Li and Han Mu arrived at the Scorpion's territory.

Without any delay, they instructed the few powerful members they had brought with them to spread out and search for Nie Tian.

However, Nie Tian had long since sensed the unfavorable situation and left that area.

Just as Song Li arranged for her subordinates to conduct a

thorough search of the Scorpion's territory, another Hunter organization, the Blood Hand, sent in a message, saying that they had a few members killed by Nie Tian.

After hearing the message, Song Li and Han Mu immediately realized that Nie Tian had already left the Scorpion's territory.

Then, the two of them hastened their way to the Blood Hand's territory.

However, just as they were searching for Nie Tian with the Blood Hand's help, another Hunter organization sent in a message, informing them that Nie Tian had appeared in their territory.

Just like that, Song Li and Han Mu were forced to move from place to place.

After moving a few times, they grew sick of following the information they received from other Hunter organizations, so they decided to plant their members in fixed locations and wait for Nie Tian to come to them.

However, Nie Tian's seven Heaven Eyes could discover them long before they discovered him, and he was thus able to steer clear of the locations where they were deployed.

After a long, fruitless wait, Song Li and Han Mu both looked somewhat exhausted as they stood atop a high hill.

After pondering in silence for a long time, Han Mu finally couldn't help but say, "Miss, it seems as if that Hua Tian person is able to sense it every time we make a move. It's as if he has deployed informants around us. Not once has he fought our Greater Heaven stage experts or the most powerful experts from the other Hunter organizations.

"Every time he has struck, he has targeted relatively weak search teams that he could easily take.

"Furthermore, it seems he never makes mistakes or puts himself in danger. No matter how hard we try, we can never catch up to him. He's always one step ahead of us."

Gnashing her teeth, Song Li frowned and said, "I have the same feeling."

With the help of his Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian moved and struck like a shadow. Every time he showed up, he would rapidly finish off his enemies and then vanish again.

All the various traps and ambushes they set up to catch Nie Tian turned out to be useless.

As the Hunter organizations sustained more and more casualties, weaker organizations like the Scorpion gradually lost their spirit.

Originally, they had all assumed that it would be fairly easy to find and capture an early Heaven stage young man, so they all

considered this search operation as a perfect chance to play up to Song Li.

Every Hunter organization wanted their members to discover and capture Nie Tian.

However, as time went by, they realized that it was actually a bitter task.

Even though Nie Tian's cultivation base wasn't high, every time he struck, he took out multiple Hunters, and all of them possessed cultivation bases higher than his.

Later, when they learned that even a few late Heaven stage Hunters had died at Nie Tian's hands, many Hunter organizations grew anxious.

As much as they wanted to back out, they didn't. They continued to search for Nie Tian, but they only marched in large teams, and made sure they had powerful experts on each team.

Each team had to have either a Greater Heaven stage expert or a handful of late Heaven stage experts.

By doing that, they significantly sacrificed the coverage and efficiency of their search, making their efforts perfunctory.

The Fang soon realized that they were merely muddling through their work, but they didn't do anything, because even they had

adopted the same strategy after losing a large number of their own members.

Eyebrows knit together, Han Mu said in a husky voice, “I’m guessing that Hua Tian probably has a special spiritual tool at his disposal, which he can use to detect life auras in his surroundings. This is the only explanation for how he has been able to steer clear of our powerful experts every time, and only attack targets he can take.”

Since Nie Tian’s cultivation base was rather low, they never imagined that he was actually able to obtain a thorough understanding of everything happening around him by relying on his soul power.

That was why Han Mu had attributed Nie Tian’s strangeness to a special spiritual tool.

“That’s probably the case.” Song Li shared his take on this matter. “It seems that we need to find a way to disturb that spiritual tool of his, therefore preventing him from detecting life fluctuations in his surroundings. Only in that way will we have a chance to catch him.”

“A name just came to my mind, Miss,” Han Mu said softly.

Song Li glanced at him before her eyes began glittering. She nodded and said, “Okay, you’d better go meet him in person. Grant him whatever he asks as long as it’s within our power.”

Han Mu seemed slightly hesitant as he said, “That man lives by himself out of Shatter City, and he’s got a strange temper. He doesn’t fear us at all. He’s even clashed with our members more than once. I’m afraid it won’t be easy to persuade him to help us.”

Song Li’s bright eyes circled around as she said, “As far as I understand it, he holds deep grudges against the Blood Skull. Tell him Hua Tian is the Blood Skull’s youngest guest elder, and he’s sworn friends with Cai Yuan. As powerful as he is, he’ll definitely become an important member of the Blood Skull someday. It’s only a matter of time.

“Given a few years, Hua Tian will surely grow into a formidable figure. This might pique his desire to exterminate Hua Tian before he matures.

“Then, you’ll throw in certain rewards for his effort. It will probably suffice.”

Han Mu’s eyes lit up as he replied, “Okay, I’ll do my best.”

“Yeah, and remember to treat him with respect. No one knows who he is or what he has done. He’s probably not ordinary.”

“I understand.”

...

Deep into the night, under the starlit sky...

Nie Tian was sitting on a rocky slope and looking into the heavens silently.

This was the place where hilly land met the wasteland. From here forward, he would have to travel on a vast plain, where there would be no hills to block his pursuers' line of sight.

During the past few days, Nie Tian hadn't found an opportunity to make a move on any Hunter teams.

He had discovered via his Heaven Eyes that all the search teams he encountered had been equipped with powerful experts.

Therefore, he couldn't kill more Hunters to shock and awe his pursuers.

However, the good thing was the Hunters couldn't form a blockade around him now that they were traveling in large groups.

With a thought, he sent a wisp of his psychic power into his bracelet of holding, where about 300 oddly-shaped stones that contained star power were piled up at the most conspicuous location.

In the next moment, one of them whizzed out.

Holding the stone in his hand, Nie Tian looked up into the starry

sky as he channelled the power from the stone into his vortex of star power, where he used it to condense stardew.

Although he had tried to pry the source of those stones from the Scorpion members he had killed, they had told him that they had only snatched them from others.

However, one thing the Scorpion members had been certain of was that those stones had been acquired from somewhere in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

During the past few days, Nie Tian had been cultivating with those stones day and night. As he did, the stardew at the bottom of his vortex of star power grew richer and richer.

When he sensed that the lake of stardew was full, he went ahead and expanded his vortex of star power with the star power he had acquired from the stones.

In his senses, the spiritual sea in his dantian was like a big ocean.

The vortexes of flame power, wood power, and star power were like three continents, inside of which there were three lakes, respectively filled with flame essence, wood essence, and stardew.

Every time he made a breakthrough, his spiritual sea, as well as the three vortexes within it and the three energy lakes within them, would be ready for a new round of expansion.



However, he could only slowly stretch the boundaries of those energy lakes after filling them to the brim.

When the lakes were expanded to the limit, it would mean that he would have to wait for his next breakthrough to further their expansion.

What he was doing now was using the strange stones to expand his lake of stardew to the limit.

As he did that, he also sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into the fragmentary star mark on his chest to learn the profound mysteries of the Stardew magic. In that way, he would soon have enough stardew to practice the magic with, and thus be able to master it within the shortest time possible.

An unknown period of time passed...

While he was in the middle of his cultivation, he discovered via one of his Heaven Eyes that a team of Hunters was marching towards him.

There weren't any Greater Heaven stage or late Heaven stage experts on that team.

If there were no mishaps, Nie Tian would have no problem annihilating the team.

"This is strange. Don't they ever learn?" He rose to his feet and

let out a cold laugh before he snuck towards them.

# Chapter 297: A Trap

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It was a team of four Hunters.

Three of them were at the middle Heaven stage, and one was at the early Heaven stage, the same as Nie Tian.

In Nie Tian's eyes, their team were so weak that they wouldn't stand a chance against him.

It had been a long time since he had encountered a Hunter team as weak as them.

Nie Tian was somewhat confused that with their puny battle prowess, they actually dared to roam about among the hills.

Therefore, he moved out without any hesitation.

HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!

He began to summon power and form spiritual energy balls in his hand as he secretly approached the team of four, hoping he could finish them off as soon as possible.

He even didn't intend to practice his battle skills on them, since they were probably too weak to take a single blow.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Three spiritual energy balls shot out simultaneously and exploded in midair before reaching the four of them.

Multicolored light spots that contained different types of toxins and impurities sputtered in every direction, enveloping the team like a glorious rain.

“Ah!! It’s Hua Tian!”

“He’s attacking us!”

The entire team screamed as they madly summoned their spiritual power to power their protective light shields, so that they could resist the corrosion of the impurities.

Cracking sounds echoed out from their light shields, as it seemed that the protective shields they had formed with their own spiritual power were too weak facing such strong corrosion. Moments later, fissures began to appear on them.

At that moment, Nie Tian appeared in front of them, enveloped by his chaotic magnetic field. He continued to create more spiritual energy balls and use them to bombard his enemies. “You lot don’t fear death, huh?”

After the series of spiritual energy balls exploded, the countless multicolored light spots completely engulfed the team of four Hunters.

The light shields of the two middle Heaven stage Hunters were the first to fail. The moment they shattered, the two Hunters' fleshy bodies were exposed to a storm of corrosive toxins.

The two of them dropped to the ground and screamed miserably, their eyes filled with rage and confusion.

However, strangely, from the beginning till the end, they glared at the early Heaven stage man on their team instead of Nie Tian.

The rage in their eyes made it clear that they were waiting for him to save them, but he didn't do a thing, and watched them die.

"Xiao Lin!" The last standing middle Heaven stage Hunter shouted, his eyes also fixed on the early Heaven stage man on their team. "What the hell are you doing?"

As their enemy, Nie Tian was immediately confused by the abnormal scene.

It obviously didn't make sense that all three middle Heaven stage hunters were enraged by their own teammate instead of Nie Tian.

At that moment, Nie Tian subconsciously began to measure up the man they referred to as Xiao Lin, who was also at the early Heaven stage.

The man looked rather unimpressive and mediocre. If he was among a crowd of people, he would be easily ignored.

Considering that he had a commoner's look, an unimpressive cultivation base, and a mediocre physique, what made his three teammates so angry at him?

FIZZ! FIZZ! FIZZ!

The spiritual power shield around Xiao Lin was like giant, upside-down bowl over his head.

It was constantly twisting and flickering due to the strong corrosion of the bright spots, as if it would burst at any moment.

However, Nie Tian observed for a while, and discovered that even though it looked like a candle in the wind, which could go out at any moment, it actually was very resilient.

“Nothing,” The man named Xiao Lin said indifferently with an expressionless face. “You’re nothing but expendable bait. You’ve already lost your value now that Hua Tian has shown himself.”

“You!” The man blurted, fuming with rage.

Xiao Lin shook his head and said no more. He lifted his left arm, which was entwined by a few bands of spiritual power, and shot the bands that resembled snakes of light toward the Hunter next to him.

BANG!!!

The middle Heaven stage Hunter's shield, which he had been struggling to keep intact, instantly burst, and the multicolored impurities flooded him in the next moment.

Before he died, he let out frenzied roars, "You'll burn in hell, Xiao Lin! Hua Tian! He's been brought here by the Fang to kill you. Run, quickly!"

"You talk too much!" Xiao Lin twitched his mouth as three beams of bright light shot out of his fingertips.

PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!

Three bloody holes appeared in the man's chest, and he couldn't say another word or make another sound.

However, Nie Tian had already sensed the danger.

Without any thought, he condensed another spiritual energy ball and cast it towards Xiao Lin, before he dashed away at the fastest speed possible.

"The woman from the Fang paid a big price for me to catch you," Xiao Lin said with a frown. "Truth be told, I'm not that fond of the Fang. However, you're the Blood Skull's guest elder, and very close

to that little bastard, Cai Yuan. That being the case, I can't really say no to their offer."

Nie Tian didn't listen to any of this and continued to run away at full speed.

By the time Xiao Lin finished talking, Nie Tian was already several hundred meters away from him and still increasing the distance between the two of them.

However, Xiao Lin didn't seem concerned at all.

With an expressionless face, he took a deep breath, and his body suddenly expanded like an inflated balloon. In the next moment, he shrank back to his original size.

Just like that, his body expanded and shrank. With every repetition, the intensity of the life aura Xiao Lin released to his surroundings grew by a great extent.

Via the Heaven Eye Nie Tian had left in Xiao Lin's location, he could clearly feel Xiao Lin's cultivation base rise from the early Heaven stage to the middle Greater Heaven stage after only a few repetitions.

While running, Nie Tian's face grew grim, as he was struck by the feeling that he had just made a rookie mistake. "Dammit! He's actually a middle Greater Heaven stage expert!"



He didn't know what kind of strange incantation Xiao Lin practiced that somehow even clouded his Heaven Eye's judgment, and made him believe that he was only at the early Heaven stage.

SHEW!

Xiao Lin, who had shown his true colors, let out a cold harrumph and shot out of the mist of multicolored impurities like a bolt of lightning.

In the blink of an eye, the distance between him and Nie Tian was shortened.

Xiao Lin had his eyes fixed on Nie Tian while a meaningful smile appeared at the corner of his mouth, as if he was a cat and Nie Tian was a mouse. Then, he licked his lips with a brutal look in his eyes.

Xiao Lin's disdainful voice rang out from behind Nie Tian, "You shouldn't have gotten so close to the Blood Skull, brat. You have only yourself to blame." He was still hundreds of meters away from Nie Tian, but it sounded as if he was whispering right into his ears.

Xiao Lin's piercing, eagle-like gaze seemed to have locked on to Nie Tian. Wherever Nie Tian went, he wouldn't be able to escape his sight.

As he chased after Nie Tian, he unleashed a strange murderous aura, which tailed Nie Tian like an invisible thread, keeping a close

watch on every move he made.

Nie Tian constantly changed his direction as he tried to take advantage of the hilly terrain and lose Xiao Lin.

However, not only did he fail to lose him, but the distance between them was even further shortened.

Seeing that Xiao Lin was now only a couple of hundred meters behind him, Nie Tian had a grim expression on his face as he began to summon the different types of power from his spiritual sea.

As his spiritual power poured madly into his legs, he traveled like a bird attempting to fly. He could sail through the air for a short while before the tip of his foot gently tapped on the ground, propelling him to shoot forward like an arrow leaving a bowstring.

He was already doing everything within his power to run away from Xiao Lin. However, Xiao Lin's low laughter continued to ring in his ears, along with his taunting, "You can't get away, brat. I admit that you're much faster and stronger than other early Heaven stage kids, but so what?

"You haven't studied the art of movement. You don't have any profound movement skills. However, even if you knew any, it wouldn't change the result. Your cultivation base is still far lower than mine.

"In a moment, I'll catch you and give you to the woman from the

Fang.

“She has already spread the word that once she catches you, she’ll let you have a taste of all the cruelest punishments there are.”

Xiao Lin never stopped provoking Nie Tian with his words. As he shortened the distance between him and Nie Tian, he attempted to get under Nie Tian’s skin and break his fighting spirit so that he wouldn’t be able to display his full strength in the real fight.

If he succeeded, he would be able to finish the job more speedily and effortlessly.

“Profound movement skills?” After hearing Xiao Lin’s words, Nie Tian suddenly remembered the Starshift magic he had been studying during the past few days.

He had already learned the method and principles by heart. However, because he had been expanding his lake of stardew, he hadn’t had a chance to practice it yet.

Now, Xiao Lin was gradually gaining on him. If he was caught by this middle Greater Heaven stage expert, his chances of returning to Shatter City alive would become very slim.

Furthermore, he had the feeling that Song Li and her subordinate had already received word of their encounter, and were either traveling towards him or setting up blockade in the vicinity.

“I have to lose this man as soon as possible! I can’t afford to wait any longer. I need to use Starshift even though I haven’t mastered it. It’s my only hope to turn the situation around!”

After Nie Tian secretly made up his mind, he began to summon star power from his vortex of star power as he ran at full speed.

# Chapter 298: Starshift!

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There were two completely different ways to cast Starshift.

One was to pour star power into his legs and conduct short but frequent shifts of location; the other was to circulate star power all over his body and conduct a single, long shift from one location to another.

Nie Tian chose the second.

Using this method, Nie Tian channeled star power from his vortex of star power and rapidly filled every inch of himself with it.

Bits of starlight rushed madly within his internal organs, bones, and meridians, putting his fleshy body under great pressure.

The moment he cast the spell, he felt a heart-wrenching pain, as if his body was being ripped apart from the inside.

The agony not only made him lose his calm state of mind, but even his sight began to grow blurry because of it.

He had to use his Heaven Eye to lock down a target location. As soon as he did, a unbelievably strong force was born within the bits of starlight that were flowing inside of him like a river of stars.

In the next moment, the hills he was surrounded by rapidly disappeared from his sight; all the hills whizzed past in front of his eyes faster than shooting stars.

As it happened, the pain was aggravated. His skin split open and bloody wounds appeared on his incomparably strong body.

FIZZ!

In Xiao Lin's eyes, the dashing Nie Tian seemed to have suddenly turned into a dazzling ball of light, which disappeared into thin air in the blink of an eye.

The ball of light vanished so abruptly that Xiao Lin couldn't even tell which direction Nie Tian had gone in.

He came to a stop.

Standing in the location where Nie Tian had vanished, he had a complicated and grim expression on his face.

"Such an amazing escape magic!" After a long period of silence, he murmured quietly, as if he still couldn't believe what he had just seen.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

Just as he was wracking his brains for an answer, Song Li and

Han Mu dashed to his side, along with a few other Fang members. They formed a half circle around him as they looked at him, frowning.

Xiao Lin had secretly sent a message to Song Li the moment he had sensed Nie Tian. After receiving the message, Song Li rapidly arranged for Fang members to spread out and form a two-kilometer-wide blockade around Nie Tian's location.

In that way, no matter which direction Nie Tian fled in, he would have ended up getting entangled with Fang members.

Once Nie Tian had been stopped, more Fang members would rush over and throw themselves on him. Then, Song Li and Han Mu would also arrive.

Upon her arrival, however, Song Li frowned deeply and asked, "Where is he? Don't tell me that you've lost him!"

Xiao Lin seemed somewhat frustrated as he said, "...He used a very strange escape magic and vanished from my sight. Tell your people to spread out and search the vicinity.

"Hua Tian's cultivation base is quite low. Even though he escaped by relying on his strange magic, he still can't get very far from here.

"Plus, this kind of instant escape magic will usually cause great damage to the caster's body.

“The longer he goes, the more damage will be done to his body. Wherever he is, he must be in a bad state. As long as we can find him, we’ll be able to catch him effortlessly.”

Song Li gritted her white teeth as she let out a cold harrumph and said, “Escape magic?! If we can’t find him and capture him, the deal between us is off!”

With these words, she immediately took out her Sound Stone and issued orders to the Fang members in the vicinity.

After receiving her orders, the Fang members, as well as a handful of other Hunter organizations, shrank their blockade circle and conducted an inch-by-inch search.

About fifteen minutes later...

Song Li didn’t receive any word regarding Nie Tian’s whereabouts from the Fang members or the leaders of the Hunter organizations.

They couldn’t find Nie Tian anywhere in the blockade.

It was as if Nie Tian had completely vanished.

Song Li glared at Xiao Lin and said, “There’s no sign of him!”



Xiao Lin's expression flickered as he said, "If he's not in the blockade circle, it means that his escape magic is so powerful that it allowed him to shift out of your blockade circle. However, if that's the case, the injuries he caused to himself by using this magic will be even worse.

"You can command your people to spread out and search in further areas. You should be able to find him that way."

Song Li's ample chest rose as she took a deep breath and said, "I'll trust you this one last time!"

Then, she issued new orders to the Fang members and the other Hunter organizations, instructing them to conduct searches in further areas.

At the same time...

Nie Tian was sitting at the foot of a hill, five kilometers from where Song Li and Xiao Lin were. He felt as if he had just fallen from the heavens. He grimaced over the pain; he felt dizzy, and blood kept flowing out of the corner of his mouth.

He struggled to his feet and gently moved his arms and legs, which made him ache all over.

He discovered that some of his fine meridians and thin bones had been ruptured or broken due to his use of Starshift.

After a deeper examination, he found that even his internal organs had sustained different degrees of injuries.

At this moment, his physical condition was only slightly better than it had been right after his battle with Li Langfeng.

However, he hadn't consumed too much of his spiritual power. Only the stardew in his vortex of star power had dropped by about thirty percent.

The single, long-range Starshift alone had cost him thirty percent of the stardew stockpile he had gone to great lengths to accumulate.

Meanwhile, his incomparably resilient body had sustained severe injuries because of it as well, which he could only recover through time and consumption of great amounts of spirit beast meat.

“Did I cast the Starshift successfully this time, or did I fail?”

“I've burnt up such a dreadful amount of stardew and caused such serious damage to my body.

“Does it mean that I did it wrong?”

With these thoughts, he sent a wisp of his psychic awareness into the fragmentary star mark on his chest.

He instantly found that, in the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation, almost half of the ancient symbols that carried the Starshift magic had already disappeared.

“I did it!” Nie Tian’s mind shook violently.

From his previous experience with Starstrike, he had learned that only when he had successfully cast the magic would the ancient symbols branded in the fragmentary star mark disappear.

The fact that part of the record regarding Starshift was gone meant that he had successfully cast the magic.

However, he had never expected that a single use of the magic would inflict so much damage to his own body. He had assumed that he had suffered from a backlash after failing to cast the magic properly.

At this moment, he realized that the injuries to his physical body were probably the price he had to pay to use this escape magic.

While he was contemplating, his seven Heaven Eyes finally flew to where he was from his original location, following his aura.

When they flew close enough, the connection between them and Nie Tian was reestablished.

Via those Heaven Eyes, Nie Tian soon discovered that scattered Blood Hand and Scorpion Hunter teams were traveling at high

speeds and shouting nonstop as they searched for him in the vicinity. Furthermore, they had Greater Heaven stage experts on their teams.

That was when he realized that not only had he lost Xiao Lin, but he was also out of the blockade circle the Fang had set up for him, so they had spread out, and were searching for him again.

“Passing the blockade and escaping from the deadly situation at the price of some fleshy wounds, it’s totally worth it!” After coming to this realization, Nie Tian’s eyes lit up. He once again summoned his strength to run at full speed despite the excruciating pain to his body, lest he be discovered by members of the Blood Hand or the Scorpion.

In Shatter City...

After months of traveling, the first exploration groups to have returned from the Void Illusion Mountain Range made it back to Shatter City.

After returning to the city, every single one of them said that it had been a rather lucky trip for them, since they hadn’t encountered any powerful Hunters on their way back.

Soon after they came back, a message spread out to every corner of Shatter City.

Many Hunter organizations were searching for a young man

named Hua Tian outside the city, and the initiator of the search was the Fang, the most dangerous among all the Hunter organizations.

They also suggested that people in Shatter City who wished to go on exploration trips should move out as soon as possible.

While the Fang and other powerful Hunter organizations were focused on searching for Hua Tian, it would be the safest time for other explorers to march into the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

Within a short time, Hua Tian became a household name in Shatter City. It wasn't long before the Blood Skull also got the news.

“Hua Tian!”

Upon hearing the news, Shi Qing's expression flickered as he rushed towards Pei Qiqi and Li Ye's residence without any delay.

# Chapter 299: Sensation

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Li Ye's hair was so messy that his head looked like a bird's nest when he walked to the residence gate. He seemed somewhat displeased after seeing that it was Shi Qing at the gate. "My senior martial sister is in the middle of her secluded cultivation. I don't think she's coming out anytime soon. What do you want?"

Li Ye knew that Pei Qiqi had been chased and badly wounded by Li Langfeng in the Void Illusion Mountain Range.

He attributed it to the Blood Skull's incompetence. She had only been in such great danger because the Blood Skull had failed to protect her.

He also assumed that the fact that Nie Tian hadn't returned yet had something to do with the Blood Skull as well.

"We've received word regarding Hua Tian," Shi Qing said.

Li Ye's expression slightly flickered as he said, "Hua Tian! What is it? Didn't he choose to walk back to Shatter City by himself instead of using your teleportation portal?"

Shi Qing knew that even though Li Ye was concerned about Nie Tian, he spent most of his time forging equipment in his own residence, and seldom paid attention to word on the street.

From the look of it, Li Ye hadn't heard the news yet. Therefore,

Shi Qing explained everything he had learned from the returning exploration teams to him at great length.

Flabbergasted, Li Ye exclaimed, “What?! All the Hunter teams that roam outside Shatter City are looking for Hua Tian? What the hell did he do to offend all the Hunter organizations?! Now that you’ve got the news, what’s your plan?”

Li Ye asked a series of questions without stopping.

Shi Qing looked at him with a examining gaze and saw through his anxiety. Then, he couldn’t help but ask, “What exactly is the relationship between you and Hua Tian?”

Both Pei Qiqi and Li Ye had been treating Nie Tian quite favorably, which was very confusing to Shi Qing.

Throughout the years he had lived in Shatter City, Shi Qing had never seen Pei Qiqi or Li Ye attach such great importance to anyone. Their special care for Nie Tian made him wonder.

Li Ye let out a snort and said, “Hua Tian was entrusted to us by an old friend of our master’s. Now that you know that those Hunters are trying to capture Hua Tian, what’s the Blood Skull’s stance? I heard that Hua Tian has acquired one of your guest elder’s identity medallions, so he can be considered as half a member now. Do you plan to sit and watch, or do you plan to send out rescue teams?”

Without any hesitation, Shi Qing said, “I’ve already reported to the head. We’ll organize a cleansing operation against the Hunters that roam outside the city. Although we’ll call it a cleansing operation against the Hunters, it’ll actually be an operation designed to rescue Hua Tian!”

The head of the Blood Skull had only granted their proposal to organize this operation because of Gu Yu and Shi Qing’s strong stance on it.

Shi Qing had fully acknowledged Nie Tian’s battle prowess after their fight against Li Langfeng. He was convinced that, given a few more years, Nie Tian would grow into a bright star in the entire Realm of Split Void.

The fact that Nie Tian was close to Pei Qiqi and Li Ye, and that Cai Yuan spoke highly of him, also played an important part in the approval of Shi Qing and Gu Yu’s proposal.

Li Ye’s originally-cold face turned warmer as he said, “I see, so what do you want us to do?”

“I’ve come to see if Miss Pei can join our rescue team so you can see how determined we are to get him back.” Shi Qing said.

“My senior martial sister is in the middle of her secluded cultivation. I’ll go with you.” Li Ye looked up into the sky and said, “I still can’t believe that those damn Hunters would go all-out to capture Hua Tian... They must be crazy!”



He was curious as to what Nie Tian had done in the Void Illusion Mountain Range that had angered all of the Hunters.

Shi Qing nodded. “Good.”

Soon, under his lead, the two of them arrived at the city gate where Liu Kang and several dozen more Blood Skull members were gathered.

A moment later, Cai Yuan came as well. He had teleported back from the Void Illusion Mountain Range the moment he heard about the operation.

Many Blood Skull members were discussing it.

“I heard that this cleansing operation is actually for the purpose of rescuing Hua Tian.”

“Hua Tian?”

“The guy who angered the Fang and now has all of the Hunter organizations looking for him?”

“Yeah, that’s him!”

“It’s said that our young lord has already made him a guest elder. Now, he’s the one with the lowest cultivation base among all of our guest elders. I don’t understand. He’s only at the early Heaven

stage. Why in the world would the Hunters make such a big fuss about him and go through so much trouble to capture him?”

“Yeah, it beats me.”

Recently, they had heard many stories about Nie Tian from the returning explorers.

They were all very confused about how a young man with such a low cultivation base could have made himself the primary enemy for so many Hunter organizations, making them give up all their other prey and focus solely on searching for him.

“Open the gate! Let’s move out!” Cai Yuan said loudly. Wearing unified garments, the several dozen Blood Skull members created light shields of different colors around them one after another before they charged out of the opened gate.

...

Song Li was stamping with fury in the hilly area.

She had mobilized every Hunter organization that answered to her to search for Nie Tian, who she believed had already sustained serious injuries.

However, he seemed to have disappeared into thin air.

During the past two days, all the Hunter organizations had spread out and conducted an unprecedented, large-scale search. However, they couldn't find a single trace of Nie Tian.

“Xiao Lin! Are you sure that Hua Tian has sustained severe injuries?” Song Li asked with a long face.

She was standing atop a high hill where there was nothing that could block her sight, and she could see the wasteland that stretched as far as the eye could see.

Xiao Lin, who was originally very confident that they could locate and capture Nie Tian within a short time, also began to question his own judgment after their fruitless, two-day search.

Xiao Lin sighed and said with a frown, “Normally speaking, after using a powerful escape magic to get out of your sizable blockade, he should have suffered a backlash so strong that he wouldn't even be able to walk. However, it's been two days, and we still haven't found any traces of him. That Hua Tian is indeed quite unique.”

“I've told you that he's not an ordinary man!!” Song Li tried her best to suppress her anger. “If he were an ordinary early Heaven stage cultivator, how could he have made such fools out of us and so many Hunter organizations? And how could he have single-handedly killed those late Heaven stage experts who are two levels higher than him?”

Xiao Lin pondered in silence for a while and said, “I might have underestimated his capabilities. However, there's no need to

worry. It's natural that he can find places to hide in such hilly terrain. Also, the ups and downs have limited my performance. Whether he wants to or not, he'll need to cross that vast wasteland to return to Shatter City. When he does, I'll be able to locate and capture him.

"I've set up many hidden spell formations that I use to capture living beings in the wasteland. Once Hua Tian sets foot into the wasteland, some of my spell formations will definitely sense his presence and give us his location.

"At that time, I'll find him, and I won't give him another chance to use his escape magic!"

"I hope things will work out this time!" Song Li didn't seem pleased at all. She used her Sound Stone to inform her subordinates and the other Hunter organizations to abandon their search in the hilly area and march into the wasteland, where they would wait for Nie Tian to tumble into their trap.

"You can rest assured. Now that I've given you my word, there's no way he'll make it back to Shatter City alive." Xiao Lin sounded extremely confident.

# Chapter 300: Short-range Shift

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Nie Tian, who had been playing with the Fang and other Hunter organizations for quite some time, didn't march into the wasteland immediately after breaking free from their blockade.

He lingered in the border area.

After roaming for a few days, he gradually discovered that the search teams he could detect in the area had become fewer and fewer in number, until one day they were completely gone.

Only at that time did Nie Tian slightly let his guard down.

During this period of time, he had been playing hide and seek with those Hunters, relying on his Heaven Eyes while bearing strong bodily pain.

After being tricked by Xiao Lin, he had become much more cautious. He had stood down even when he encountered weak Hunter teams.

Whenever he had the chance, he would consume large amounts of spirit beast meat so that he could absorb the rich flesh power to fix his fleshy injuries.

After a few days, the injuries he had sustained by casting Starshift gradually recovered.

Meanwhile, the green aura in his heart, which had shown its endless need for flesh power, seemed to be sensible of Nie Tian's poor condition, and thus stopped devouring the newly-generated flesh power.

All the flesh power Nie Tian had acquired from the spirit beast meat went straight towards his wounded parts, where the ruptured meridians and bones were rapidly healed.

Soon, night fell...

Chilly moonlight poured down from the heavens. Numerous brilliant stars were shining in the night sky.

Nie Tian was sitting in the shadow of a hill, absorbing the copious amount of star power from a strangely-shaped stone in his hand.

The star power he had consumed to cast Starshift had long since been restored.

Therefore, the star power he channeled from the stone into his vortex of star power was refined round after round before turning into stardew and falling into the lake of stardew.

After some time, the lake of stardew was filled to the brim. As he continued to fill it with more star power, it began to slowly expand.

After a while, the stone in his hand cracked, and he took out another one from his bracelet of holding, his eyes glittering with the light of excitement. “These stones have indeed greatly improved my efficiency.”

He had a feeling that it wouldn’t take long for him to expand his lake of stardew to the limit with the help of these miraculous stones.

By that time, his vortex of star power would be ready for his breakthrough from the early Heaven stage to the middle Heaven stage.

When he returned to Shatter City, he would be able to concentrate solely on refining his vortexes of flame, wood, and spiritual power.

Spiritual materials of the fire and wood attributes could be found in Shatter City fairly easily. He wouldn’t need to worry that he would run out of them.

In Shatter City, he could also rent the Blood Skull’s cultivation rooms. By doing that, he would be able to cultivate his spiritual sea more efficiently, and ready himself for his next breakthrough.

“Wait, Starshift!” With a thought, Nie Tian sent a wisp of psychic awareness into the fragmentary star mark in his chest, where he began to review the other method to cast Starshift.

He had read and learned the method of casting the short-range Starshift as well, but he hadn't had a chance to practice it.

His recent experience with the long-range Starshift made him realize that not only could he use it to lose his pursuer, but he could also use it to escape the blockade his enemy had set for him.

Only then did he realize that Starshift could be used as a powerful life-saving magic.

Therefore, he was determined to thoroughly learn and master both casting methods before returning to Shatter City.

During the following days, he remained in the hilly area and cultivated day and night. With no more threats from searching Hunters, he focused on condensing stardew while contemplating the other method to cast Starshift.

Time flew, and several days passed...

Nie Tian had long since healed his physical wounds through consuming large amounts of spirit beast meat.

Afterwards, he consumed some more spirit beast meat and used the essence of flesh and blood to nurture the green aura in his heart.

After using a number of stones that contained rich star power, the expansion of his lake of stardew had reached its limit.



That was when he realized that he could put his cultivation of the Fragmentary Star Incantation on hold for a while.

Hence, he used all of his time and energy to practice Starshift.

Standing atop a hill, bathed in silky moonlight, Nie Tian took a deep breath as he began to summon star power.

In the next moment, countless shiny sparks of starlight flew out from within the vortex of star power in his spiritual sea.

He suddenly had a feeling that he had become as light as a feather, as if he had escaped the leash of gravity.

“Starshift!” As soon as the thought appeared in his mind, the bits of starlight in his legs realigned and formed a mysterious formation of stars, which seemed to give rise to a strong driving force.

SHEW!

In a split second, he disappeared from his original location and reappeared in another location.

SHEW! SHEW! SHEW!

Whichever destination his Heaven Eyes locked on to, his body

would appear in the next moment, as if he was swiftly teleporting from location to location.

Like invisible stars, his seven Heaven Eyes provided him with guidance. Once they floated to a location and determined a destination, a profound connection would be instantly established between them and Nie Tian. In the next moment, he would appear in the target location.

It was a mysterious feeling.

It was as if a special, intangible path was created between his location and his destination, allowing him to shift to his destination at lightning speed.

In a small area under one of Nie Tian's Heaven Eyes, everything started to grow blurry. Immediately afterwards, Nie Tian appeared out of nowhere. It was a rather strange scene.

“Three hundred meters!” Nie Tian estimated the distance he had just covered before he cast another Starshift towards a further destination.

SHEW!

When he appeared, he discovered that he was still about seventy meters away from his destination.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

After a few more tests, he realized that, considering his current cultivation base and the strength of his fleshy body, the effective range of his short-range Starshift was about 330 meters.

Only within this range would he be able to shift from one location to another with absolute precision.

Once he targeted a location that exceeded this range, he would still be able to cast the magic, but he might not be able to appear right at the targeted location. Some deviation might occur.

It seemed that the short-range Starshift was more designed for battle purposes than escapes.

However, he had to be careful with it, since the slightest miscalculation of the distance could achieve the opposite result, and end up putting him in danger.

After a few dozen attempts, he gradually got the hang of it. Then, with a thought, he sent a wisp of psychic power to examine the fragmentary star mark on his chest.

Just as he had expected, the remaining half of the ancient symbols that had recorded Starshift were already gone.

This meant that he had mastered both methods to cast Starshift.

Eyes narrowed, he conducted a thorough examination of himself to see if he had undergone any changes.

He discovered that, after using Starshift several dozen times, he had consumed about seventy percent of his star power, as well as a substantial amount of flesh power. Both were within acceptable ranges, however.

This meant that, during a battle, if he couldn't launch Starstrikes to attack his enemy, he would still be able to use Starshifts repeatedly.

“Two kinds of Starshifts. One can be used for escaping. Using it will immediately inflict serious damage to myself, so I'd better not use it unless I have to.

“The other can be used for battle purposes. If I use it along with the chaotic magnetic field, the result might be outstanding. It will allow me to handle multiple enemies, or confuse one enemy in battle.

“The Fragmentary Star Incantation from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace is indeed a rare gift to this world. No wonder the Heaven Palace Sect and the other powerful forces in the nine realms exerted all their power to fight for it!”

Even though he had only mastered Starstrike and Starshift, Nie Tian had already realized how powerful the Fragmentary Star Incantation was. He knew that now, with those two magics at his disposal, his battle prowess had risen to a whole new level. And he

hadn't even fully mastered the first part of the Fragmentary Star Incantation yet.

“A profound legacy from the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace indeed!” Nie Tian looked up into the starry sky and recalled his experience in the Ancient Fragmentary Star Palace, and how it had sailed away and disappeared into the deepest parts of the heavens. He had a feeling that it must still exist somewhere in this universe, and after mastering Starstrike and Starshift, he was now a part of some mysterious sect.

“Hopefully, I can be powerful enough to travel across the boundless starry river someday. By that time, I might be able to leave the Domain of the Falling Stars and soar in the vast ocean of stars.

“Perhaps, I'll be able to see the Fragmentary Star Incantation again, and even meet other people who also cultivate the Fragmentary Star Incantation.

“That would be terrific!”

With a yearning expression on his face, Nie Tian looked up into the starry sky, immersed in his dreams.

A long time passed. The stars and the crescent moon faded away, and day broke. Only then did he wake from his dreams.

“It's dawn already...” He smiled heartily before casting Starshift

another time. His figure blurred and, in the next moment, he appeared at a location more than 300 meters away.

After that, he threw his head back and let out a long laugh. Figuring that he had better not waste his star power, he ran towards the endless wasteland and started the second half of his return journey.

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